



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/JANUARY 2014/VOL 50 NO 1

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

Saturday, January 4

Cherry Creek State Park

**Leader: Buzz Schaumberg,
303-478-4641**

Meet leader at the marina parking lot at 8 a.m. We'll car pool from the marina. This is a good chance to get a start on your year lists! Bring a scope if you have one as we will be looking for any unusual gulls or other water birds on the reservoir. We will walk along the shore of any open water, covering less than two miles. We will bird until 12 noon and lunch is optional.

Wednesday, January 8

**Aurora Reservoir and Prairie
Roads Arapahoe County**

**Leader: Bob Shade,
303-975-2476,
<WRShade3@gmail.com>**

Full-day trip. Meet at the northeast corner of Parker Rd. and Quincy Ave. in Aurora at 9 a.m.

More specifically gather on the south edge of the parking lot opposite Denver Mattress.

Will carpool from there 15 miles straight east to Aurora Reservoir. **\$10 fee per car;** have exact change available for self-pay envelopes.

After trying to pick out unusual gulls or geese among 1,000 ringed-bills and eating lunch in an enclosed facility, we will cruise county roads for Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks (and maybe longspurs).

We will return to rendezvous by 4 p.m. at the latest.

Drivers get 30 cents a mile, divided among the riders includ-

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Board considers website redesign

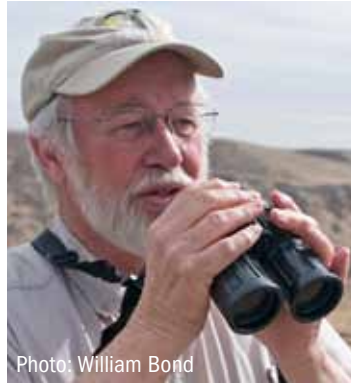


Photo: William Bord

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

On November 10, 2013, DFO's newly constituted Information Technology (IT) team met to discuss how to approach redesign of the organization's website.

Although some DFO members do not use computers, most members do, and it is important that DFO use this information channel to deliver information and services to those members as effectively as possible.

Webmaster Richard Holmes Anderson has put in long hours getting our website where it is today.

Under his tenure back issues of *The Lark Bunting* have been archived on the site and current issues are now posted immediately to the site for members to access.

Using the website as the vehicle for delivering the newsletter to most mem-

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Staff and volunteers at the new Lee Martinez Park banding station in Fort Collins were surprised when this Wood Thrush showed up in their nets on September 28. See story on page 4. Greg Levandoski

Field Trips

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ing the driver. Limit 16 people and 4 cars in the carpool.

Please contact the leader ahead of time. Please read the liability waiver on the DFO website ahead of time so you know what you are signing.

Scope highly recommended and bring 2-way radios for raptor cruising if you have them. If the reservoir freezes over completely, or the weather is extremely cold, we may cancel.

Saturday, January 11

88th and the Platte

Coleaders: Bruce Neuman and Mark Amershek

Meet leaders at 7:30 a.m. at E. 88th and the South Platte River (parking lot just south of the intersection of 88th and Colorado Blvd.).

This walk will be a rendezvous with the duck population of this winter river habitat. It will be a half-day trip walking on paved flat trails (2–4 miles). We will spend time observing the birds. Dress for the cold weather.

Please RSVP Mark at 303-329-8646 or <mamershek@msn.com>.

Thursday, January 16

Red Rocks Park

Leader: Tom Bush, 303-904-4576

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Red Rocks Trading Post and bird until 12 noon.

We'll spend some time checking out all the activity at the feeders—possible rosy-finches, jays, chickadees, and maybe some surprises.

We'll do some walking, 2 miles or less, looking for raptors. Be prepared for the weather. Trails could be slick and challenging. Bring water, snack, and lunch.

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bers has allowed us to provide color photos and graphics without the expense of color printing.

Joining Anderson on the IT team are Will Burt, Mark Amershek, and Susan Perry. Burt, a member of the DFO board, has been managing DFO's email delivery program, which he initiated.

Through this channel, we can now deliver *The Lark Bunting* and important announcements to all members who have shared their email address. This allows us to get out word about field trip changes or cancellations and meeting announcements in a timely manner.

Amershek, also a DFO director, became interested in the potential of the website as a member of the Field Trip Leader Development Committee. The committee had been discussing the potential for having the ability for members to sign up for field trips on the website.

This would speed up the sign-in process at the trailhead, particularly if participants could agree to the trip waiver online. Mark considered this a priority upgrade for the site.

Perry is a new member of DFO who responded to my call at a recent meeting for IT assistance. She works as a financial industry software quality assurance professional.

At the November board meeting, Anderson presented some of the ideas the IT team had discussed. In addition to the potential for online registration for field trips, the board discussed the possibility of having an online membership renewals and hosting the membership database in a secure area online.

Prior to the board meeting, Kay Niyo contacted web designer Ann Johnson for an estimate of what it would cost to redesign the DFO site to give us a more contemporary look and add functions that would serve our members better. Ann has designed a number of sites for birding organizations in Colorado and other states.

Most recently she has redesigned the County Birding site for Colorado Field Ornithologists <<http://coloradocountybirding.org/>> and the Colorado Bird Records Committee website <<http://coloradobirdrecords.org/Default.aspx>>.

Ann's estimate of \$5,000 based on preliminary information we provided is in line with information on web design costs from other sources. Some members of the board were concerned about that cost. However, DFO currently has reserve balances that would more than cover this expense. Currently those funds sit in the bank losing value to inflation.

It is my belief that DFO funds should be used to benefit members, and an improved website would do that. Particularly important will be what designers call mobile device optimization. Simply put, that means members would be able to view the website on their smart phones and tablets in the field.

The board has asked the IT team to develop a request for proposals for their approval. In 2013, the board approved a redesign of *The Lark Bunting*. That effort met with wide approval from members. My hope is that 2014 will bring a redesign of the website that will be even more successful.

Haglund takes over as DFO Historian

Kristine A. (Kris) Haglund has assumed the duties of DFO Historian. Haglund recently retired as chair of the Bailey Library and Archives Department at the Denver Museum of Natural and Science (DMNS).

In her new role with DFO she fills a position that has been vacant since the retirement of long-time DFO historian Warren Finch. When Finch retired as historian, several file cabinets of DFO records were transferred from his garage to DMNS as part of the process of establishing a permanent home for DFO records in the Bailey Library and Archives.

Haglund is now Archivist Emerita at the Bailey Library. She joined the staff of DMNS in 1975 and served as its founding archivist from 1977 until September 2013. She also served as the original chair of the Library/Archives Department 1984–2013.

Kris was responsible for the care and management of the entire Museum's noncurrent records, as well as the collections of records of people and organizations associated with the Museum, including DFO.

Prior to joining the Museum, Kris was the sole museum staff member of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum in Golden, Colorado (1967–1975), where she designed and built exhibits, developed educational programming, and instituted collections management systems. She received a degree in Russian from the University of Colorado at Boulder (1969) and also completed the CU Museum Studies Program.

Kris has graduate course work in archives administration from CU and was certified by the Academy of Certified Archivists. She was a member of the founding committee of the Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums, served as president of the Society of Colorado Archivists and as chair of the Museum Archives Section of the Society of American Archivists, and has held numerous additional positions with these and other professional museum, library, and archives organizations.

She served on the advisory board of the University of Denver's Library and Information Science program 2002–2013. In 2007, along with the Museum's image archivist, she received the DMNS Leadership Circle Advisory Council's Special Recognition Award.



Kris Haglund, DFO Historian

Field Trips

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To reach Red Rocks Trading Post go west out of Morrison on Hwy 74. Less than 0.5 mile out of Morrison, turn right on Red Rocks Park Road (Entrance 2 to Red Rocks Park).

Stay right at the first fork. Continue on Red Rocks Road approximately a mile to the Trading Post.

Saturday, January 18
Sawhill and Walden Ponds
Leader: Paula Hansley,
Home 720-890-2628,
Cell 303-263-1714

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at Cottonwood Marsh parking lot at Walden Ponds on 75th St. in Boulder County. Bird until about 11 a.m.

Walden is accessed from a short road, which goes west from 75th Street about 0.9 mi. north of Valmont Rd.

The group will look on the ponds and in the woods for ducks and winter residents in both Walden and Sawhill areas. We will also look for Dippers and other birds along Boulder Creek near 75th St.

Bring a scope if you have one, along with snacks, water, and appropriate clothing. We will walk about 2 miles mostly in the Sawhill area because most Walden trails are still closed due to the September flooding. Trails are relatively flat and easy.

Sunday, January 19
Longmont Area Birding
Leader: Chris Owens, 303-772-6048, <christiel@q.com>
Meet leader at 8:30 a.m. at Jim Hamm Natural Area parking lot. From I-25 take Exit 240.

Go west 4 miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld CO Line Road, then approximately 2 miles

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north to park on left at E 17th Ave.

Bird until 1 or 2 p.m. Walking will be held to a minimum, less than 2 miles, and we will drive from site to site.

We will be looking for waterfowl, raptors, and other winter residents. Bring lunch, water, snacks if needed, and dress for the predicted weather.

Also be prepared to be a rider in a car pool. **Call or email to register.**

Saturday, January 25

Allenspark and Lyons

Leaders: Niña Routh, 303-987-8687, and Mike Serruto

Meet the leaders at 8:30 a.m. at the southwest side of the Wagon Road RTD Park and Ride, 120th Ave. (from I-25) and Huron (less than 0.5 miles west of I-25).

Or the Boulder County or north- and west-siders, and any others can meet at the parking lot near the public restrooms in Sandstone Park in Lyons by 9:30.

We plan on carpooling from both locations so please be prepared for riding as well as driving.

Dress for winter conditions. We'll be walking approximately 3 miles throughout the day. Plan on a traipse around the Fawn Brook Inn and area looking for the elusive rosy-finches and assorted winter species.

Last year's highlights included Evening Grosbeaks and Clark's Nutcrackers.

Then we'll head toward Lyons looking for shrikes and eagles along the way and visit Oskar Blues for lunch.

Lunch will be followed by either a walk along the river

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DFO grant assists educational bird banding project challenged by flood

by Jeff Birek

Fall 2013 was Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's inaugural season of the Lee Martinez Park banding station in Fort Collins. The beginning of the season presented a major challenge that we were not prepared for.

The flood of the Cache la Poudre River in mid-September prevented us from opening the banding station for the first scheduled week. Once the Federal Emergency Management Agency closed access to the river, we were unsure if we'd be able to band birds at all. Despite the station being underwater for several days, we were able to resume banding activities the week after.

There were a few days of bad weather after that. However, we were still able to open the banding station for 10 mornings between September 24 and October 10, 2013. We captured and banded 63 birds of 14 species. We re-caught five of these same birds a second time and re-released them. One of those, a Black-capped Chickadee, was caught three times throughout the banding season. All of the birds were released unharmed and healthy.

There were 198 people who visited the banding station during the short season. This included three school groups from Poudre School District: a group of pre-K students from the Young People's Learning Center; students and instructors from Colorado State University, University of Northern Colorado, and Front Range Community College; and a group of learning-disabled adults.

Many local birders and aspiring naturalists would stop by regularly to check on our progress. We made many great connections and look forward to new partnerships and opportunities arising from this new point of contact.

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Visitors from the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery staff and a few Fort Collins residents enjoy viewing a Wilson's Warbler being handled by Anna Harris of RMBO. Greg Levandoski

Barr Lake CBC Sunday, January 5, 2014

Meet at Old Stone House (RMBO Headquarters) at 7 a.m. to organize for field activity. The headquarters is at the south end of Lark Bunting Lane in Brighton. Coffee, hot cocoa, tea, and donuts will be available as we organize for the count. Participants can register online or contact Chuck Hundertmark at <chundertmark8@gmail.com> or 303-604-0531.

Roxborough State Park CBC Saturday, December 28, 2013

Bird lovers unite! All ability levels welcome. Join us for the 2013 annual Douglas County Roxborough SP CBC and potluck chili dinner.

Teams spend the day counting birds and at the end of the day converge at the Roxborough State Park Visitor Center for a potluck chili dinner. State Park Pass on 28th not required for counters.

Registration is required before December 24. There is a \$2.00 chili charge. Chili and drinks are provided. Please bring a side dish to share. Most teams start by 7:30 a.m.

Call the visitor center at 303-973-3959 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to register.

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The highlight of our banding season was capturing a Wood Thrush. This species is an uncommon migrant in Colorado and its presence surprised the banding station staff and volunteers. The species' nearest regular breeding sites are over 400 miles away in eastern Nebraska and South Dakota.

This is an excellent indicator that the chosen site hosts a variety of migratory species and will yield critical information contributing to local and national knowledge on bird distributions and ecosystem health.

The most commonly banded species was House Sparrow with 22 captures. We captured 11 House Finches and nine Black-capped Chickadees. We banded four individuals or fewer of the other species.

On behalf of RMBO, I thank Denver Field Ornithologists for their funding support this year. We are looking forward to expanding our banding efforts in the spring and fall of 2014. This would not have been possible without your generous help this year.

***It's time to renew
your DFO membership for 2014!
Please fill out and mail the application
on the back page.***

Field Trips

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in Lyons in search of riparian species or a stroll on Rabbit Mountain (trails are more challenging than the river walk) to look for raptors and other winter residents. There is always a surprise.

Trip is limited to 10 participants so an RSVP is a must. Please call Niña at 303-987-8687 to hold a spot.

**Sunday, January 26
Barr Lake SP-North Side
Leader: Chuck Hundertmark,
303-604-0531**

Easy walking trip for all birding skill levels. Meet leader at parking lot at the south end of Lark Bunting Lane at 8 a.m. (Note: This is not the usual Barr Lake SP meeting place.)

From the Bromley Lane/E 152nd Ave. exit off I-76, drive east on E 152nd Ave. across the railroad tracks and take an immediate right onto Lark Bunting Lane. Park pass or admission fee required.

We'll bird the area around RMBO's headquarters and the fields and ditches below the Barr Lake dam. We'll look for winter residents including raptors and waterfowl on the lake.

Bring water, snacks, binoculars, and scopes. Half-day trip. **Call or email leader if you plan to attend <chundertmark8@gmail.com>.**

—Scheduled by Chris Owens

60th Denver Christmas Bird Count: Saturday, December 14, 2013

Count Leader/Compiler: Joey Kellner (303-978-1748), <vireo1@comcast.net>

Feeder Coordinator: Veronica Holt (303-646-3829), <veronicaholt43@comcast.net>

Potluck Coordinator: Cheryl Teuton (303-912-3341), Please call her with what dish you can bring.

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5 p.m., Chatfield State Park Headquarters (south side of the lake near the Heronry Overlook); State Parks vehicle entry pass required.

Please carpool if possible. Ask your

Area Leader about Compiler's offer for reimbursement.

All are encouraged to participate in the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sponsored by the Denver Field Ornithologists and the National Audubon Society.

To participate, call one of the Area Leaders listed below to assist in a particular area, or call the Count Compiler (contact info above) if you would like to help in an area that still needs additional observers.

After a day in the field, all participants are invited to attend the compilation meeting to feast, warm up, chat

with other birders, and find out how the count fared. It is a lot of fun.

The compilation meeting will be at 5 p.m. (see location above). Feel free to bring a dish or desert to share!

Fees: None! So, no excuses! Come have a great time and help count birds!

The 15-mile diameter "count circle" is subdivided into 24 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below.

Participants should contact Area Leaders for count day meeting times and places.

Area	Number and Location	Area Leader	Phone Number
1.	Red Rocks Park	Bob Brown	303-791-6204
2.	Lower Bear Creek	Michael Kiessig	303-909-5169
2A.	Bear Creek Lake Park	Mark Amershek	303-329-8646
3.	Bow Mar/Marston	Kay Niyo	303-679-6646
4A.	Lower South Platte - East	Ed Holub	303-979-2194
4B.	Lower South Platte - West	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
5.	Highline Ditch	Nancy Crews	303-791-8276
6.	Plum Creek	Norm Erthal	303-917-2596
7A.	Middle South Platte - West	Randy Lentz	303-680-3381
7B.	Middle South Platte - East	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
8.	Chatfield State Park	Joey Kellner	303-978-1748
9.	Upper South Platte *	Jill Holden	720-288-4018
10.	Lower Deer Creek	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
11.	Upper Deer Creek	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728
12.	Yegge Peak	Ann Bonnell	303-979-6211
13.	Doublehead Mountain	Amy Davis	303-549-7759
14.	North Turkey Creek	Larry Modesitt	303-740-7575
15.	Indian Hills	Sherman Wing	303-324-9636
16.	Upper Bear Creek	Tom Parchman	303-274-7951
17.	Ken Caryl Ranch	Tom Bush	303-904-4576
18.	Garrison Gate	Steve Stachowiak	303-791-4974
19.	Morrison/Willowbrook	Mark Chavez	720-448-5485
20.	Willow Creek	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
21.	Mount Lindo/Willow Springs	Wayne Wathen	720-344-0158

* To participate in this area, you must contact the area leader no later than Monday, December 9.

Special thanks to Ted Lewis of Philadelphia who gave a donation to DFO because Karen vonSaltza and Cynthia Madsen led him on a birding day. Karen requested the money be used for student members.

Denver Urban Christmas Count: Wednesday, January 1, 2014

Count Leader/Compiler: Hugh Kingery (303-814-2723)

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5 p.m., Casey Davenport's home, 415 South High St. (5 blocks west of University Ave., about 2 blocks south of Alameda).

Please call Urling (303-814-2723) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods.

A holiday tradition—everyone welcome: beginners, intermediate, and advanced. The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved.

Start the New Year with a half-day or whole-day effort—a good way to start your New Year's List!

The count covers a 15-mile diameter circle that includes the Platte River from north Denver

city limits to Mississippi St., west to Buckley Field and Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

The "count circle" is subdivided into 14 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below.

Participants should contact Area Leaders for meeting times and places on count day, Wednesday, January 1.

Area Location	Leader	Phone
South Platte (south) (to Confluence Park, some walking)	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
South Platte (central) (Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery, some walking)	Casey Davenport	303-744-0613
South Platte (north) (walking)	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
Lower Sand Creek/Commerce City/ Montbello (some walking)	Mike Serruto	303-377-9870
Aurora, Tollgate Creek, Upper Sand Creek/ Bluff Lake (walking)	Randy Lentz	303-680-3381
Cherry Creek, dam to University Blvd. (7-mile walk)	Paul Slingsby <paslingsby@comcast.net>	303-422-3728
Cherry Creek Res. (some walking)	Bob Brown <PicaPica@att.net>	303-791-6204
SE Denver, N/Hampden (walking)	Mary Keithler <mkeithler@gmail.com>	303-771-1421 303-941-7009 cell
Kent School, S/Hampden (some walking)	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
City Park/Park Hill (car, some walking)	Kevin Corwin	720-482-8454
Botanic Gardens, Wash. Park	Marilyn Rhodes	303-674-9895
Denver Country Club (car, some walking)	Bob Santangelo	303-477-1367
Rocky Mtn. Arsenal (car, some walking)	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
Fairmont, Lowry Field (car, some walking)	Tuesday Birders	303-979-6211
Denver Zoo	Brad Parks	Closed

Tale of a Red-tailed: Dark-morph Hawk returns to Chatfield

by Lee Farrell

Migration is an always interesting subject and a constant source of questions yet to be answered.

Late in October of this year, my wife and I were birding in the riparian areas of Chatfield State Park.

Hiking along, the mind often wanders and at Chatfield sometimes settles on how the bird habitat will be altered if and when the water reallocation project moves forward.

Some background: early in 2006 it had become readily apparent that my health was dependent upon getting exercise; walking was the recommended solution.

Not being a fan of the treadmill and bored with walking the neighborhood, I started regularly hiking the trails of Chatfield State Park located not far from my home.

Observing some birds I could not identify, I started carrying my camera which in turn quickly grew into the affliction that I now suffer from commonly referred to as “birder.”

I’ve walked at Chatfield on a regular basis ever since. Sometime during the winter of 2008–2009, I noticed that I was encountering what seemed to be the same dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk on each of my hikes.

As a dark morph it was somewhat distinctive but it also had the habit of alarm calling frequently, sometimes incessantly, and was not something I had observed in other red-taileds.



Dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk calling to Lee as it flies over for a photo-op! Lee Farrell

Often the first indication that the bird is in the area is its alarm call from a perch. The only way you can get close to the bird is if it chooses to fly near you, typically continuing to call.

When spring arrived in 2009, I noted that I was no longer encountering the bird. But to my surprise that fall the bird had again returned to the area, alarm calling and never letting me get very close to it.

Intrigued by this, I went home and searched through my photos from prior winters. Not all that great, but there they were, images of a dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk.

A stretch in credulity, I even had a picture of a first-year dark morph taken during those beginning walks early in 2006.

With the coming of each succes-

sive fall I’ve looked forward with hope and anticipation and ultimately been rewarded by the bird’s arrival.

Hiking along this October, pondering the future of birding at Chatfield, we came around a bend in the trail and heard the alarm call of a Red-tailed Hawk in the distance.

Scanning its favorite perches, there was the bird, marking the 8th (if not the 9th) anniversary of its wintering over in the less traveled reaches of the park.

Seeing the bird return for the first time each fall evokes an emotional response not easily described in words.

As we look to future winters with the proposed changes to the reservoir and park, I wonder if the bird will continue to winter here, I wonder how long I will return here.

Last Month's Program: Connecting Cultures

Tim Johnson

A glance around the room during November's DFO meeting, revealing an almost uniformly White and graying audience, underscored the relevance of this month's presentation.

Susan Bonfield, Executive Director of Boulder-based Environment for the Americas (EFTA), detailed some of her group's work in a talk entitled "Connecting Cultures: Engaging Latinos in Birding."

EFTA, with Susan as Principal Investigator, was funded by the National Science Foundation to study obstacles to Latino participation in science and nature programs, and develop methods to engage this heterogeneous group.

She began by contrasting the city-wide participation in Mexico's International Hummingbird Festival in San Miguel de Allende, with marginal Latino presence (<7%) at Barr Lake's Fall Birding Festival in her study's first year, despite the presence of large Latino communities nearby (e.g., Brighton, about 40%).

Barr Lake State Park was one of six study sites in the EFTA effort (plus three control sites), possibly thanks to Susan's long history with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

Other study sites included Bandelier in New Mexico; New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail; and others in

New York, Washington, and California.

Control sites in Texas, Colorado, and Florida had no outreach intervention.

All sites sponsored birding and other nature events for local participants and were within easy reach of large Latino communities.

During Study Year 1, using on-site surveys and surveys in the Latino communities near study sites, EFTA determined basic demographic characteristics of the communities. Sample averaged data:

- interest in science education: high (as Hummingbird Festival would predict);
- educational level: 12 years + (50%), <9 years (23%);
- generational time in U.S.: 1st (52%), 2nd (20%), 3rd (12%), 4th (1%); and
- awareness of study site opportunities: low (all sites 7.5%–25%, Barr Lake 15%).

Such results suggest that communication was a problem, but not the whole story.

At Barr Lake, survey respondents commented that they did not know if they were welcome, and that specific invitations might be in order.

Barr Lake itself was better known historically as a car dump site than as a state park!

EFTA's response at Barr Lake was to create bilingual advertising and signage; conduct bird walks in Spanish (Latinos attended these regardless of language skills); and have translators available.

In Study Years 2 and 3, Latino participation tripled.

Susan also described an EFTA-initiated paid internship program conducted in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Informed by the Connecting Cultures study, EFTA collaborated with four National Wildlife Refuges to recruit young Latinos interested in careers in natural resource fields.

Such recruits worked in local Latino communities in addition to providing on-site science education (in this case, shorebird natural history and conservation).

The internships were intended to both improve community outreach and enhance career opportunities for successful applicants.

Interesting biographies of interns can be found on EFTA's excellent website <www.birdday.org>.

In the extended question period, it was pointed out that Anglos also have a long way to go in engaging their own communities in natural history and conservation.

Perhaps EFTA can teach something to all of us.

As you renew your DFO membership for 2014, which expires Dec. 31, please consider making a generous donation to the DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Grants Fund.

We depend solely on donations to operate the grants program.

Colorado Birds of the Month: *January*

Ira Sanders

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them.

I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In January, the average high in Denver is 43 degrees and the average low is 16 degrees, though we all know it can be considerably warmer and colder.

Much of what I pointed out last month still applies to January but some dynamics of birding have changed as the new year starts.

This is the time of year to be looking for Snowy Owls on the plains of Colorado. If you are anywhere east of the I-25 corridor, be alert for something that may look like a white fireplug (water hydrant) sitting on the ground.

The year 2012 was an amazing invasion year for this species and several were found east and north of Barr Lake in Adams County two years ago.

In January/February 2013, a juvenile snowy was seen for a month and a half near 138th Ave. and Harvest Rd. just east of Barr Lake, as well as an adult snowy for fewer days.

This is also the time of year to be alert for the world's largest falcon, the Gyrfalcon.

They can be seen on power poles and seem to prefer an area near open bodies of water where they can pick off ducks.

While you are out in the plains looking for Snowy Owls and gyrs, watch for Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings mixed in with flocks of Horned Larks.

Rosy-Finches (Black, Brown-capped, and Gray-crowned) are most easily found in the winter at some bird feeders.

In recent years, Allenspark, Colorado, in Boulder County, and specifically the Fawn Brook Inn, has been a reliable place to see these finches as well as Evening Grosbeaks and sometimes Pine Grosbeaks.

If you go to the Fawn Brook Inn to watch their many feeders, consider

bringing some birdseed along to donate to the cause.

Georgetown and Silver Plume have also entertained rosy-finches if someone there is feeding birds.

The Red Rocks Trading Post has become a prime spot for rosy-finches and other birds in bad weather or right after a snow storm.

The adult Golden-crowned Sparrow has returned here again this winter season.

Sometimes on the same day you can get all four of the Zonotrichia sparrows that are seen in the United States; Harris's Sparrow and White-throated Sparrow can be seen along with White-crowned Sparrows and the aforementioned golden-crowned.

Also, all five subspecies of Dark-eyed Junco can be found here at this time of year. This is another place where spreading some seed on the ground will really help the birds and attract them to an easily accessible viewing spot.

Red Crossbills, and very infre-

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Black Rosy-Finches are seen in fewer numbers at winter feeding stations than the other rosy-finch species. *Kay Niyo*



Brown-capped Rosy-Finch nests in the mountains of Colorado and is commonly seen nesting on Mt. Evans. *Ira Sanders*



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch can be seen feeding at Red Rocks Trading Post feeders. *Ira Sanders*



Hepburn's subspecies of the Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch is seen in smaller numbers with other rosy-finches. *Ira Sanders*

quently, White-winged Crossbills, can sometimes be found in large urban cemeteries with mature spruce trees.

One good spot can be Grandview Cemetery in Ft. Collins and another is the Denver Mountain Park above the buffalo overlook exit on I-70 west of Denver depending on the seed crop.

Also, keep your eyes open for Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in clumps of large-diameter pines along the Front Range. You can key in on fresh sap-wells and/or the bird's habit of drilling holes in a spiral around the tree.

Pueblo City Park has been a good place for Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in recent years and Cañon City has been good for Williamson's and Red-naped Sapsuckers. The pines around the Abbey Winery is a good place to try.

If you see flocks of Cedar Waxwings, make sure to sift through them for Bohemian Waxwings.

There have been big invasions of Bohemian Waxwings in recent years. They like juniper berries and

crabapples as well as other berries.

Another location that has become a standout is the Ft. Collins Museum of Discovery's feeders adjacent to Lee Martinez Park and located just west of the intersection of College Ave. and Cherry St.

The official address is 408 Mason Ct., Ft. Collins, CO. In January 2013, this was a reliable spot for Common and Hoary Redpolls and Bohemian Waxwings were also in the area.

There are good places to look for waterfowl and gulls along the front range.

A spotting scope is almost always needed when looking at waterfowl at lakes and reservoirs.

Places to consider include Valmont Reservoir in Boulder County; Hamilton Reservoir at the Rawhide Power Plant, 18 miles north of Ft. Collins in Larimer County near Wyoming if the observation area is open; Pueblo State Park west of Pueblo; Cherry Creek State Park in Arapahoe County; Chatfield State Park in Jefferson and Douglas Counties; and the South Platte

River, south of 88th in Thornton and continuing to south of 74th in Denver County.

If you want to make an out-of-town trip, the Bosque del Apache NWR, south of Socorro, NM, is a great place for a spectacle of Snow and Ross's Geese as well as other waterfowl and thousands of Sandhill Cranes.

I thank Dick Schottler, Dave Leatherman, and Karl Stecher for their contributions to this month's column.



Snowy Owls move south to the northern U.S. in times of food shortage farther north. *Ira Sanders*

Remembering Jim Duggan, memorial event to be planned

Long-time DFO member Jim Duggan, 75, died in his home last month. Jim was a strong supporter of DFO and Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

He is remembered by many for his ready smile and passion for birds.

Interment was held December 3, 2013, at Fort Logan National Cemetery.

A memorial donation account has

been established in his name at Vectra Bank, 7391 W. 38th Ave., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033.

Donations will be used to purchase a bench with his name on a brass plaque to be placed at RMBO headquarters in Brighton. Jim spent many hours volunteering at the Old Stone House and loved that location.

Checks may be made to "F.O.B. James O. Duggan acct." and sent

(U.S. Mail) directly to the bank's Wheat Ridge office. Vectra Bank has offices throughout metro Denver that will accept donations to the account.

Please feel free to call Niña Routh (303-987-8687) evenings if you have any questions regarding this donation.

Friends are planning to have a birding occasion at RMBO in Jim's memory, possibly early spring.

John James Audubon comes to life at Denver Museum in January

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science are partnering to welcome historic enactor and storyteller Brian "Fox" Ellis to the museum in January to portray famous ornithologist, naturalist, and artist John James Audubon.

Ellis will bring Audubon to life in an enactment meticulously researched from Audubon's journals,

essays, and letters to his friends and colleagues.

Jan. 23, 8 p.m., "An Evening with John James Audubon." Audubon (Ellis) tells of his travels to draw every bird in North America. Cost is \$15, or \$12 for RMBO and DMNS members.

Jan. 23, 5:30 p.m. and Jan. 24, 7:30 a.m., "Birding with John James Audubon." Audubon (Ellis) leads

a bird-watching adventure in the museum's Rare Birds Hall. Discover amazing birds, such as the extinct Passenger Pigeon and Carolina Parakeet. Cost is \$33, or \$27 for RMBO and DMNS members.

Visit <www.dmns.org/afterhours> or call 303-370-6000. RMBO members should email <info@rmbo.org> to receive the promo code and instructions on how to receive their discount.

What Bird Is This?

Mary Cay Burger

In the winter at Red Rocks Trading Post while watching the birds come to the feeders we sometimes see a small gray bird feeding on the ground.

Other juncos are a little smaller and have dark hoods or rufous backs. But this bird is larger and all pale gray except for two thin, white wing-bars (occasionally absent) and white in 3+ outer tail-feathers.

Depending on the light it can appear bluish-gray. Some individuals have darker gray lores and chin.

They breed in sandy pine forests in the Black Hills of South Dakota, SE Montana, NE Wyoming, and NW Nebraska.

We see very few of this junco subspecies each winter. Their wintering range extends east into central South Dakota and south through Colorado and into New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Diet is mainly small seeds (they love millet) and some arthropods. What is it?

Answer: White-winged Junco (*Junco hyemalis aik-*



White-winged Junco eating white proso millet. Kay Niyo

eni), a subspecies of the Dark-eyed Junco. Read more about all the Dark-eyed Junco subspecies at <<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/716>>.

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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS 2014

January	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
February	Jackie King	303-287-1644
March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
May	Jackie King	303-287-1644
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
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September	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Jackie King	303-287-1644
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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Internet bird-sighting discussion list www.cfbirds.org

Colorado Rare Bird Alert

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hlif, Dick Schottler 303-659-8750

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members: John Breitsch, Denver; Beth Madden, Golden; Dean Shoup, Golden; Robin McDougal, Denver

Thank you for your donation to the Research, Education, and Grants Fund: Dan and Renee Brachear,

Karel Buckley, Bill and Suzanne Wuerthele, Kathanne Lynch and Beth Madden, Will Burt, Melissa Smith, Charlie and Jean Curlee, Sarah Bradley, Mary and Dave Driscoll, Lynn and Liz Willcockson, Paul Slingsby, Jeff Stephenson, Betsy Shaw, Chuck Hundertmark and Marjorie Jannotta

Upcoming Speakers

Meredith McBurney Jan. 27
“The Passion and the Payoff:
Why We Band Birds and What
We Are Learning”

Diana Tomback Feb. 24
“Corvid Feed Dispersal”

Ted Floyd March 24
“Secrets of Boulder Revealed
At Last”

Nathan Pieplow April 28
“Five Audio IDs Every Colo-
rado Birder Should Know”

**Kim Potter and
Jason Beason** Sept. 22
“Latest on Black Swift Research”

Bill Eden Oct. 27
“Birding in Borneo”

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 20
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 35
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$ 5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

☐ **Do not publish in roster.**

Email (legible) _____

☐ **Do not publish in roster. (Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)**

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting
Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742
Featured This Month
New DFO Historian
Tale of a Red-tailed
What Bird Is This?



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/FEBRUARY 2014/VOL 50 NO 2

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

Saturday, February 1

Castlewood Canyon State Park

**Leader: Laurie Duke,
303-646-4699**

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at the north entrance to the park in the Homestead Parking Lot.

This will be a half-day trip, lunch optional but do bring snacks and drinking water.

The trip will involve hiking over trails but leader will try to avoid icy areas so wear good hiking shoes.

Sunday, February 2

88th and the Platte

**Leader: Chris Owens,
hm 303-772-6048 (leave
message and number) or email
christiel@q.com**

Meet leader at 7:45 a.m. at E. 88th and the South Platte River (parking lot just south of the intersection of 88th and Colorado).

We will check the duck population of this winter river habitat, any overhead raptors, and any other bird that flaps our way while we walk along paved flat trails (2–4 miles).

This will be a half-day trip, birding until noon or shortly thereafter. Dress for predicted weather. Bring water, snacks, binocs, and scopes.

Please register with leader in case of weather cancellation.

Saturday, February 8

Northeastern Raptor Tour

**Leader: Joey Kellner,
303-978-1748**

Meet leaders at 6:30 a.m. at the Division of Wildlife, 6060 North Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway,

Continued on page 2

The Passion and the Payoff: Why We Band Birds and What We Are Learning

Meredith McBurney, RMBO Biologist, will be the featured speaker at the Monday, January 27 meeting of DFO.

The sheer joy of sharing a moment, up close and personal, with a bird before releasing it back into the wild is at the heart of what drives every bird bander to rise each morning before dawn, spend long hours at the banding station, and deal with occasional bad weather and boring days with no birds.

But the really big deal, and the more difficult work, is figuring out how to use the data obtained from capturing, marking, assessing, and releasing birds to better protect these birds that we love.

Meredith will take us through the evolving world of bird “banding”—from Audubon’s work in the early 1800s, through the traditional process of marking with numbered bands, to the cutting edge technology of geolocators, radio telemetry, and genetic and stable-isotope markers.

She will share information about what RMBO and other research organiza-

Continued on page 8

Future birders inspired, thanks to grant

by Chris Blakeslee

During the 2012 and 2013 grant years, the DFO board awarded \$9000 divided between nine worthy grants. When taken all together these grants have included all aspects of our mission statement: education, research, and conservation.

One grant that was particularly fun and rewarding was made to Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy (Denver Public Schools) for \$1000 to purchase binoculars and bird field guides to be used in their science program. Kunsmiller is located near Harvey Park in southwest Denver.

Dozens and dozens of middle school students have benefited from this grant as you can see from some of the children’s own words



and artwork below. Each letter was addressed to “Dear Denver Field Ornithologists.”

Thank you for the binoculars and the field guides. Without the sup-

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Bring lunch, water, and snacks for a full day of driving and watching raptors in the northeastern corner of Colorado. **Call leader if going.**

Sunday, February 9
Bear Creek Lake Park
Leader: Paul Slingsby,
720-347-5169,

<paslingsby@comcast.net>

Half-day trip. Meet at the dirt parking lot north-east of C-470 and Morrison Rd, 7:30 a.m.

Unless drivers have annual permits, we will bird along the creek on our way to Bear Creek Lake Park.

Leader will email a condition report if ice or snow will make for difficult walking. Bear Creek Lake Park will offer open water, cottonwood forest, and grasslands. **Please RSVP.**

Saturday, February 15
Red Rocks Park
Leader: Tom Bush,
303-904-4576

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Red Rocks Trading Post and bird until 12 noon. We'll spend some time checking out all the activity at the feeders—possible rosy-finches, jays, chickadees, and maybe some surprises.

We'll do some walking, 2 miles or less, looking for raptors. Be prepared for the weather. Trails could be slick and challenging. Bring water, snack, and lunch.

To reach Red Rocks Trading Post go west out of Morrison on Hwy 74. Less than 0.5 mile out of Morrison, turn right on Red Rocks Park Road (Entrance 2 to Red Rocks Park). Stay right at the first fork. Continue on Red Rocks Road approximately a mile to the Trading Post.

Continued on next page

60th Annual Denver Christmas Bird Count

Day, date, and time: Saturday, December 14, 2013, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Compiler: Joey Kellner **Feeder coordinator:** Veronica Holt

Weather: Clear to mostly clear **Temperature:** 2 to 52 deg. F

Wind: variable, 0 to 15 mph

Snow Cover: 0 to 8" **Still water:** Partly open **Moving water:** Partly open

Observers: 163 (148 in 37 parties, 15 watchers at 15 feeders)

Total party hours: 221.5 (158 on foot, 63.5 by car)

Total party miles: 669.65 (123.65 on foot, 546 by car)

Hours spent watching feeders: 43

Count totals: 93 species; 22,870 individuals

Participants by area (Area leader's names in **bold**):

- 1 Red Rocks Park (RRP): **Bob Brown**, Dan Stringer
- 2 Lower Bear Creek (LBC): Chuck Aid, Jennifer Clay, Rick Creswell, Jan Emmert, Martha Eubanks, Diane Hutton, Cindy Johnson, **Michael Kiessig**, Robert Martinez, Amy Morton, Janet Shin, Steve Sieders, Kara Spitler
- 2A Bear Creek Lake Park (BCP): **Mark Amershek**, Edward Donnan, Mary Geder, AJ Gest, Judy Lane, Bruce Neumann
- 3 Bow Mar/Marston (BMM): Mary Burger, Gale Evans, Peggy Gonder, Candice Johnson, Tim Johnson, Tina Jones, Cynthia Madsen, Betsy Maslow, Richard Maslow, **Kay Niyo**, Ira Sanders, Tammy Sanders
- 4A Lower South Platte-east (LSP): Ruth Breckon, Patty Echelmeyer, Nelson Ford, **Ed Holub**
- 4B Lower South Platte-west (LSP): Dan Brooke, Deb Nazzaro, Susan Perry, **Dick Schottler**, Tim Smart, Cheryl Teuton, Christopher Warneke (+2)
- 5 Highline Ditch (HLD): **Nancy Crews**, Duke Deegan, Susan Dann, Leslie Newell, Pan Schmidt
- 6 Plum Creek (PCK): Burke Angstman, Joey Angstman, **Norm Erthal**
- 7A Middle South Platte (MSP): **Randy Lentz**
- 7B Middle South Platte (MSP): Sue Barnhart, **Hugh Kingery**, **Urling Kingery**, Deb Ostergard, Darrin Seex, Mike Serruto, Cathy Sheeter
- 8 Chatfield Reservoir (CHA): Brenda Beatty, Caroline Holden, **Joey Kellner**, Charlie Lawrence, Gwen Moore, Bob Spencer, Sandra Spencer
- 9 Upper South Platte (USP): Betty Glass, **Jill Holden**, Mary Keithler, Meredith McBurney, Harriet Stratton
- 10 Lower Deer Creek (LDC): Julia Auckland, Scott Dieni, John Esperance, Kristin Gruebmeier, Stephanie Jones, Lara Juliusson, PJ Ross, Betsy Shaw, **Lynn Willcockson**
- 11 Upper Deer Creek (UDC): Meredith Anderson, John Harrington, Norm Lewis, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, **Paul Slingsby**
- 12 Yegge Peak (YPK): Audrey Boag, **Ann Bonnell**, Phil Gerkin, Celia Greenman, Linda Knudsen, Walt Knudsen, Else Van Erp
- 13 Doublehead Mountain (DHM): **Amy Davis**, Nancy Davis, Tim Davis, Adam Green, Steve Smith
- 14 North Turkey Creek (NTC): Ed Furlong, **Larry Modesitt**

Continued on page 3

- 15 Indian Hills (IHL): Bill Eden, Caroline Gilbert, Michael Gilbert, Susan Harper, Bob Holmes, Jeanette Holmes, Elane Lockey, Megan Miller, Sharon Powers, Dick Prickett, Rob Raker, Marilyn Rhodes, Warren Roske, Jordon Spalding, Sue Summers, Karen von Saltza, **Sherman Wing**
- 16 Upper Bear Creek (UBC): **Tom Parchman**, Chris Rurik, Laura Steadman
- 17 Ken Caryl Ranch (KCR): Sue Barnhart, Maggie Brahm, **Tom Bush**, Nathan Farquhar, Tim Farquhar, Ruth Gabraski, Patti Galli, Fran Haas, Rhonda Ingle, Randy Look, Clint Shoemaker, Bea Weaver
- 18 Garrison Gate (GGT): **Steve Stachowiak**
- 19 Morrison/Willow Brook (MWB): **Mark Chavez**, Steve Miller
- 20 Willow Creek (WCK): Amber Carver, **Doris Cruze**, Donna Emmons, Tom Emmons, Doug Hodous, Barbara Shissler, Peggy Wait, Natalie Vande Vuss, Dennis Wojcicki
- 21 Mt. Lindo/Willow Springs (MLW): Laura Wathen, **Wayne Wathen**
“Roving Expert and Photographer” – **Glenn Walbek**

2013 Denver CBC Highlights

Joey Kellner, Compiler

The 2013 Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) took place on December 14th, the 60th consecutive year that the Denver Field Ornithologists has conducted a Christmas count within the same 15-mile diameter count circle established in 1954 and centered just north of the old Ken Caryl Ranch entrance.

The weather on count day started clear and became mostly clear with calm to low winds. It was a beautiful day to be out with the team reporting a respectable 22,870 individual birds of 93 species recorded by 148 field observers and 15 feeder watchers.

No new species were added to the cumulative Denver CBC list in 2013. The grand total of species seen since 1954 thus remains at 199.

“Rare” birds (seen on less than 10% of the previous counts) found this year included:

Brant (2nd record) in Area 8,
Northern Saw-whet Owl (4th record) found in Area 7a,
Chihuahuan Raven (3rd record) in Area 3, and
Gray Catbird (5th and 6th records) one seen in Area 7a and one in Area 7b.

“Uncommon” birds (seen 10–24% of the previous counts) found this year included:

Cackling Goose (multiple areas—split and tracked starting in 2004),
Long-tailed Duck (two birds seen in Area 4b),
Eurasian Collared-Dove (multiple areas—recent explosive addition to the annual count),
Say’s Phoebe (Area 3),
Clark’s Nutcracker (Area 15), and
Golden-crowned Sparrow (Area 1).

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Sunday, February 16
Roxborough State Park
Leader: Doris Cruze,
303-798-8072

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at the Visitor’s Center for a 3.5-hour walking tour on an easy trail.

Participants should see Golden Eagles and species common in the foothills.

State Parks Pass required or \$5 entrance fee per car. Lunch will be optional but there is a beautiful place to sit on the patio and watch the birds as you eat lunch.

Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield SP to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles).

This is an excellent trip for novice birders and new members.

Saturday, February 22
Chatfield State Park
Leader: Ed Holub,
303-979-2194

Meet leader at 8 a.m. inside west entrance of park off S. Wadsworth, 1.5 miles south of C-470. This will be a half-day trip so lunch is optional. **Call leader if going.**

Sunday, February 23
Barr Lake State Park
Leader: Gregg Goodrich, 303-655-9135

Meet leader at Barr Lake Visitors’ Center at 8 a.m. Bring scopes, binoculars, water, and dress for the predicted weather.

Walk between 3 and 4 miles looking for waterfowl, and resident birds surviving winter. Lunch is optional. State parks pass required.

Call only if you have questions.

—Scheduled by Jackie King

FUTURE BIRDERS INSPIRED, continued from page 1

plies we wouldn't be able to do the bird watch. We saw some spectacular birds at Harvey Park. We saw Mallards, Northern Shoveler, and a [Hooded] Merganser. The Mallards were in a big circle making a whirl pool by eating food....

Sincerely, Klarissa

Thank you for everything you have done for the community. I had so much fun on our trip. I saw so many geese floating in the water or waltzing around. I have two favorite birds. My favorite is the owl. My 2nd favorite bird is the flamingo. I like birds.

Thanks again, Sydni

Thank you for the binoculars. I got so excited because we were testing in almost every class, but in science class we got to look at birds. And thanks to the binoculars, we got to see the birds closer than they are. We saw lots of Canada Geese. We saw more than 100! Anyway, this is a picture of a Canada Goose I drew. (No Tracing)

Sincerely, Evani

Thank you for giving us \$1000. We bought the binoculars and the field guides. We saw magnificent birds like the Hooded Merganser. We also saw the Northern Shoveler

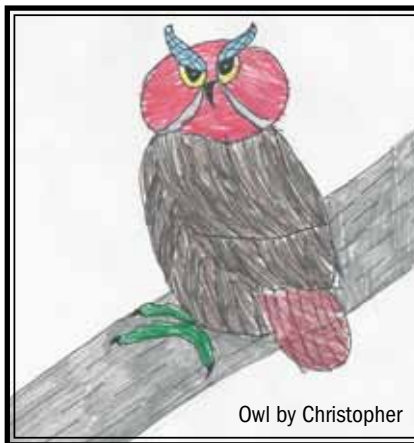
Continued on page 5



Mountain Bluebird by Haley



Gray Catbird by Noelle



Owl by Christopher



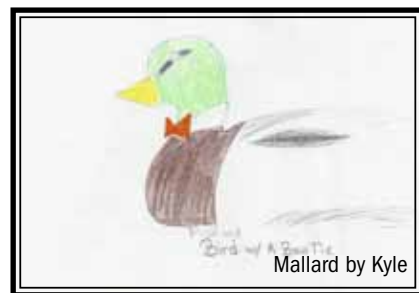
Bald Eagle by Ivana



Black-capped Chickadee by Liz



Cinnamon Teal by Nina



Mallard by Kyle

*As you renew your DFO membership (which expired Dec. 31) for 2014,
please consider making a generous donation to the DFO Research,
Education, and Conservation Grants Fund.*

We depend solely on donations to operate the grants program.

FUTURE BIRDERS INSPIRED, continued from page 4

and the Mallard. Plus we saw some crows. I had a lot of fun using the equipment. Thank very much for the money.

Sincerely, Anthony

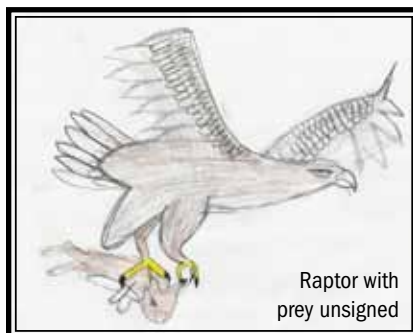
My name is Aracely. I am in sixth grade at KCAA. I want to thank you for the 1,000 dollar grant for binoculars and field guides. The bird that we saw the most of was the Canada Goose. There were over 400 of them. The other kind of bird we saw was a Common Goldeneye. There were only 3 of them.

Thank you sincerely, Aracely

I really appreciate you giving us \$1000 for the binoculars. The field guides helped us a lot when we were looking at the birds and geese. That's a lot of money, so thank you very much for that. One bird I saw with the binoculars is a Northern Shoveler and a Ring-billed Gull. Thank you Denver Field Ornithologists again for the money for the binoculars.

Sincerely, Daphanie

Thank you for donating to 6th grade Science at KCAA! We appreciate the experience that we got to have. We saw many birds such as Canada Geese, Mallards, Northern Shoveler, California Gulls, and an



eagle. With the \$1000 we got brochures about birds and binoculars. Thank you again.

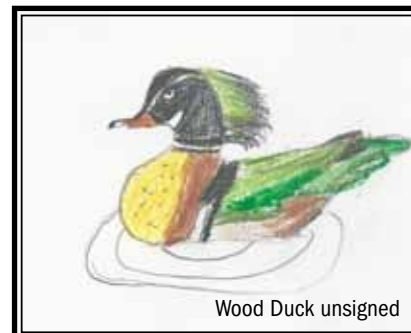
Sincerely, Karina

Thank you...out at Harvey Park Lake, we saw lots of Canada Geese, about ten or so Ring-billed Gulls, a flock of Northern Shovelers, and one lonely guy called a Hooded Merganser. They were so cute! Why are Hooded Mergansers always lonely? I just barely saw a Bald Eagle. Why are Bald Eagles called bald when they're not? Thank you so much.

Sincerely, Krystal

First of all I would like to say thank you for the one thousand dollars you donated to Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy. Yesterday my class went out to go bird watching for the 12 days of Christmas bird watch.

We saw many different birds, such as the Canada Goose, the



American Crow, the House Finch, the Northern Shoveler, and many more.

With your donation we bought binoculars and field guides. Going bird watching with those tools really helped us figure out the type of bird it was. Thank you.

Sincerely, Ciara

Thank you for the thousand dollar grant so we could carry out our experiment...While we were looking at the geese and ducks we saw something that could have been a California Gull or the White-tailed Ptarmigan.

Sincerely, Mikayla

Thank you for the \$1,000 grant for the binoculars and the field guides. Yesterday I saw a Northern Shoveler. They go in circles. We appreciate the binoculars and the field guides. Thank you so much.

Sincerely, Ivana

Thank you for your donation to the Research, Education and Conservation Grants Fund:

Nina Routh, Polly Reetz, Rex McGehee, Carol Cook, Judy Lane, Robert Beck, Von Fransen, Roy Hohn, Rick Cresswell, Francis Commerron, Joan and Jack Whiting, Jan Justice-Waddington, Laura and Wayne Wathen, Mary Ann Tavery, Peggy Roberts, Sally Plummer, Hugh and Urling Kingery, Pearl Jordan, Carol Cochran, Chris Blakeslee, Kitsi Atkinson and Tom Pool, Debbie Seiden, Cynthia Madsen, Joyce Takamine, Mary Zick, Newell Grant, Mackenzie Goldthwait and Doug Kibbe, Kevin Corwin, Laurie Chotena, Jannette Wesley, William and Nancy Urquhart, Susan Clasen, George Mayfield, Jane Axtell, Bobbi Vollmer, Doris Cruze, Patti Galli, Charles Thornton-Kolbe, Mark Amershek, Edward Furlong, Martha McCauley, Kate Brannan and Paul Welschinger, Doug and Jan Hodous, Cris Cook, and Tina Jones.

Rio Grande birding festival proves too tempting to resist

by Mary Geder

After reading Mary Cay Burger's birding festival suggestions in this past year, I attended the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Harlingen, TX on November 6–10, 2013.

I had never been to the Rio Grande Valley and I thought, hmmm..., new birds and warm weather would be nice in November! And there are those two southern kingfishers (and many other new birds) that I'd really like to see!

I arrived a couple days early to become familiar with the area, learn a little history, and do some independent birding.

The first couple days involved visits to Laguna Atascosa NWR, Sabal Palms Sanctuary, and a couple sites on South Padre Island. I saw Aplomado Falcon, Green Kingfisher, Olive Sparrow, White-tailed Hawk,

Black Vulture, dozens of Harris's Hawk, Green Jay, and more. Wow, this was fun and the festival hadn't yet started!

Trips: An astounding variety of trips in different habitats were offered—36 field trips and eight photography field trips.

They included workshop-like trips (Birding 101, Birding by Ear, Bird Banding, Shorebird ID) and targeted-species trips (Seedeaters, Area Parrots).

There was a Gold Series led by notable birders like David Sibley, Jeff Gordon, Kenn Kaufman, and Jon Dunn.

Birding areas included National Wildlife Refuges, State Parks, World Birding Center sites, a Nature Con-



Many birders enjoying the second U.S. record Amazon Kingfisher through their scopes. *Mary Geder*

servancy Site, and several private sites (King Ranch, Colley's Island, El Canelo).

In addition, Big Day vans set out to tally up some impressive lists and a Big Sit was conducted at the festival headquarters.

Each 44-passenger bus had four or five local and national leaders. It was great to have several young talented

Continued on page 7

60TH ANNUAL DENVER CBC, *continued from page 3*

Record-high individual numbers were established for **three** species this year: Greater Scaup (34 vs 6 in 1968, 1977, and 2011), Red-tailed Hawk (143 vs 136 in 2008), Gray Catbird (2 vs 1 in 1988, 1994, 1995, and 2007).

The ten most numerous species observed on the 2013 count were (1) Canada Goose (7255), (2) American Crow (1517), (3) Mallard (1152), (4) Cackling Goose (1130), (5) Dark-eyed Junco (1070), (6) European Starling (965), (7) House Finch (958), (8) Red-winged Blackbird (819), (9) Black-billed Magpie (639), (10) Ring-billed Gull (584). Together, these ten species accounted for 70% of the birds counted.

Eight additional "Count Week"

species were noted in the three days on either side of count day: Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Long-eared Owl, American Pipit, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black Rosy-Finch, and Pine Grosbeak. Making an overall count of 101 species for the circle this year!

As compiler of the 60th Denver Christmas Bird Count, I thank all of the field observers and feeder watchers for participating. Special thanks go to the Area Leaders whose efforts and knowledge make this count a success, to Veronica Holt for volunteering to line up the feeder watchers and for compiling the feeder results, and to Cheryl Teuton and Dan Brooke who did a wonder-

ful job of coordinating this year's potluck.

Thanks also to Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the use of the Chatfield State Park Multipurpose Room for our compilation meeting. Lastly, thanks to all those that brought drinks and food to share! Sharing food and friendship after a day in the field was a great way to relax before the holidays. I hope to see you all at the compilation next year!

DFO members recognized: At the compilation dinner for the 60th Denver Christmas Bird Count, Joey Kellner praised three DFO members for long-time service. Hugh Kingery and Patty Echelmeyer have participated in the CBC for 50 years and Lynn Willcockson for 51 years.

leaders from Mexico and Latin America.

Some of these folks were researchers, government, or NGO professionals indicating strong cross-border cooperation and enthusiasm.

Lectures and workshops: Two seminars were held in the headquarters auditorium each afternoon. Topics included warblers, Aplomado Falcons, hummers, and manakins.

I attended the warbler workshop where the authors of presented concepts in their new book.

The first night Kordial featured a huge buffet, wine, beer, and great live music. Other evenings included a keynote address by Victor Emmanuel, David Sibley, and Jeff Gordon's infamous Birding Quiz Show.

Birder's bazaar trade show: More than 50 vendors attended the trade show with information about places to bird, optics, books, art, and birding gear.

Jonathan Wood, a licensed wildlife rehabilitator with The Raptor Project, provided a couple of shows a day featuring gorgeous raptors. The (very large) Eurasian Eagle Owl was a breathtaking creature.

Typical day: Aside from your daily preselected trip, there were many activity choices for afternoon and evening.

Most of the trips departed at 5 or 6 a.m. and returned between 1 and 2 p.m. Mornings were spent on our organized trip and afternoons could be used as desired.

We birded other locations based on the "daily sightings board" or tips from other birders.

Many good birding locations are within an hour's drive of Harlingen. We were rewarded with a Common

Paraque (six feet away) and a fun visit with Refuge Police near Boca Chica (see Logistics).

Logistics: I flew to Harlingen via Houston and rented a car. Hotels are within $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 mile from the festival headquarters.

It was not difficult to navigate around "the valley." Navigating with phone maps seemed to work well most of the time.

As I approached Sabal Palms Sanctuary and the border, however, my phone did welcome me to Mexico and advised me to use a new system or access code. Then it blanked out.

A cautionary note: always be sure to have your driver's license or ID with you. A friend and I chased the reported Fork-tailed Flycatcher on the Boca Chica Road. This is a very low traffic road that dead ends at the beach.

It's very birdy so we were stopping frequently to get out and bird. We were stopped by refuge police for not pulling completely off the road. They checked my license, gave us a road safety lecture, and we got away without a ticket.

Big surprise: Every birder is looking for an exciting rarity with such a concentration of great birders.

On Saturday morning an Amazon Kingfisher was spotted! It was only the second U.S. record for the species.

It was verified and hordes of birders converged on a little resaca (oxbow) about 30 minutes from Harlingen. For one whose favorite family is the kingfishers (well, ok, cuckoos, shrikes and owls, too) it was very special!

Even with patrol car lights flashing, officers directing traffic, and optics reps having a field day sharing



Photo through scope of second U.S. record Amazon Kingfisher. Mary Geder



Well camouflaged Eastern Screech-Owl seen at birding festival in Texas. Mary Geder

their scopes, the bird was far enough across the water to be going about her business unperturbed.

Attend: If you are thinking about attending this festival next year, go! This (2013) was the 20th year for the festival so they have plenty of experience in delivering what birders want.

It is very well run and everything happens on time. Leaders and fellow birders were welcoming and eager to share information about the birds or the area. And, best of all, the birds showed up in all their glory. So, consider attending a birding festival!

THE PASSION AND THE PAYOFF, continued from page 1

tions are learning that will help us develop better strategies for protecting birds. She also promises to share some of the best banding station photos taken over the years at Barr Lake and Chatfield SP.

Meredith McBurney banded her first bird—a Black-and-white Warbler—as a research assistant on an Earth-watch project studying Long-tailed Manikins in Monteverde, Costa Rica in 1997.

She began volunteering for RMBO in 1998 and joined the staff in 2004. She currently bands every spring at the Chatfield Station near the Audubon Nature Center and every fall at Barr Lake, banding more than 2000 birds and educating at least as many students annually.

She has a B.S. in Zoology from Colorado State University.

The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium. Enter through the west door by 7:30 p.m. We must lock the door a little after that time.



Tennessee Warbler (left) and Bay-breasted Warbler (right) side-by-side.



Two Black-and-white Warblers banded and released together.



Gray Catbird banded (with band in insert). *Lee Farrell*



Hermit Thrush caught in nets and banded. *Bob Knapp*

Colorado Birds of the Month: February

Ira Sanders

In February, the average high in Denver is 47 degrees and the average low is 20 degrees, up 4 degrees on both high and low from January, though we all know it can be considerably warmer and colder.

It is certainly still winter so what I said about January is also true for February. When you are out on the plains and in the foothills, keep your eyes open for early bluebirds.

Cañon City and Pueblo City Park are presently entertaining sapsuckers in the yellow pines and other pines that can be found in both places.

Tunnel Drive in Cañon City is a reliable spot for Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Canyon Towhee. A Golden-crowned Sparrow has wintered there with the flocks of White-crowned Sparrows.

Continue to check the Platte River between 88th and 74th. Quite a few good birds are appearing there now, including Barrow's Goldeneye and Glaucous Gull.

Pueblo Lake State Park can have 10 species of gulls this time of year. Start at the tires at the marina below the Visitors Center and don't forget to check the river below the dam for Black Phoebe and other wintering birds when you go from the south side to the north side of the lake.

Valco Ponds east of the park is a good place for sparrows and other brush seeking species.

Great Horned Owls start laying eggs as early as mid-January so you may hear and see increased activity by these owls.

Great horneds nest in many places in Colorado in mountain forests and across the plains. There is a good chance there is a pair nesting near you.

Where the owls can't find abandoned hawk or magpie nests, they can nest on the ground.

Both eagles, golden and bald, will start nesting in February. Barr Lake has had Bald Eagles nesting there for many years.

However, when the easily observed nest blew down, the eagles moved closer to I-76 and in a location that is harder to observe. We will have to wait and see if the birds move back to the site that is easily seen from the gazebo.

This is a great time of year to find up to six species of geese by scanning through the huge flocks that winter in Colorado.

Weld and Larimer Counties are an especially good place to find Canada, Cackling, Snow, Ross's, Greater White-fronted Geese, and Brant.

Winter is a good time of year to learn about nests while the branches are bare and the nests from last summer are visible.

Try and pick up discarded monofilament fishing line and red plastic binder twine during your winter walks, as these are harmful to birds.

The Bosque del Apache NWR, south of Socorro, NM, is still a

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Ross's Goose can be seen in small numbers in Colorado winter flocks of geese. Kay Niyo



Snow Geese occur frequently with Canada Geese in winter in Colorado. Kay Niyo

ABC Guide can make us better advocates for bird conservation

Review by Chuck Hundertmark

*The American Bird Conservancy
Guide to Bird Conservation*

Daniel J. Lebbin, Michael J. Parr,
and George H. Fenwick

The University of Chicago Press,
2010

Sooner or later anyone entering the birding life encounters the challenges of bird conservation.

Most of us adopt the birding life for pleasure, whether it is the joy of elegant plumages, the delight of a melodic song, the challenge of identification, the satisfaction of learning, or the social reward of sharing experiences with like-minded souls.

The discovery that our own species threatens some of the feathered species we have come to love is an intrusion on that pleasure.

That intrusion becomes a more serious irritant when we realize that we may be the only advocates for the defense of birds and their habitats.

It is a challenge to balance the pleasure of observing birds with the ethical imperative to play some part in their conservation.

For those of us who take on the role of trip leader, it is particularly

important that we give some attention to the second part of that challenge.

The American Bird Conservancy's 2010 *Guide to Bird Conservation* is an excellent tool for gaining an understanding of the contemporary environment of bird conservation in North America.

The work begins with a brief introduction giving the history of bird conservation and the rationale for conserving birds.

This is followed by a chapter on the 212 WatchList species, "...the priority species for conservation in the U.S."

For each species, the chapter presents a half page of information including distribution, threats, current conservation measures, and actions needed. Species are coded as Red or Yellow WatchList species depending of the seriousness of threats to their populations.

The book's final chapter on "Strategies and Actions," includes a section on conservation priorities by state. The paragraph on Colorado lists the 11 Red WatchList species that occur in the state.

The second chapter discusses the major bird habitats of the United

States and the prominent bird species that depend on the habitats.

Overall condition of each habitat and the major threats to the habitat are discussed along with conservation actions being taken and those needed. Representative Important Bird Areas that include the habitat are described for each birdscape.

Chapter 3 walks the reader systematically through the plethora of threats faced by birds and their habitats. For each threat, potential solutions and needed actions are discussed.

International bird conservation is covered in the fourth chapter, while Chapter 5 offers "Strategies and Actions."

Some of the strategies require political or collaborative efforts, while others can be implemented by individuals.

For DFO trip leaders, the paragraph on Colorado in this chapter is a good starting point for becoming better versed on bird conservation issues in our area.

Learning more about the Red WatchList species and most endangered habitats in the state will make us better advocates for the birds.

COLORADO BIRDS OF THE MONTH, *continued from page 9*

great place for a spectacle of Snow and Ross's Geese as well as other waterfowl and thousands of Sandhill Cranes in February.

Don't forget the importance of watering (during extended winter thaw periods) trees and shrubs that you have planted in your yards for birds.

There is a fact sheet available online from CSU Cooperative Extension

entitled "Winter Watering." <<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/columngw/gr131019.html>>

I thank Joey Kellner, Dave Leatherman, and Karl Stecher for their contributions to this month's column.



Greater White-fronted Geese. Kay Niyo

Denver Field Ornithologists

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February	Jackie King	303-287-1644
March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April	Scheduler needed	
May	Jackie King	303-287-1644
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
August	Jackie King	303-287-1644
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DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members:

Phil Gerkin, Aurora; Sheridan Samano, Lafayette

Upcoming Speakers

Meredith McBurney Jan. 27
 “The Passion and the Payoff:
 Why We Band Birds and What
 We Are Learning”
See details on page 1

Diana Tomback Feb. 24
 “Corvid Feed Dispersal”

Ted Floyd March 24
 “Secrets of Boulder Revealed
 At Last”

Nathan Pieplow April 28
 “Five Audio IDs Every Colo-
 rado Birder Should Know”

**Kim Potter and
 Jason Beason** Sept. 22
 “Latest on Black Swift Research”

Bill Eden Oct. 27
 “Birding in Borneo”

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 20
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 35
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$ 5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

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 Englewood CO 80111-5742

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Featured This Month
Inspiring Future Birders
Fantastic Festival
CBC Wrap-up



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/MARCH 2014/VOL 50 NO 3

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

**Saturday, March 1
and Sunday, March 2
San Luis Valley Exploration
Leaders: Chris Owens and Jim
Petri, <christiel@q.com>,
303-772-6048**

Day and a half trip to "The Valley," as the locals call it.

Meet the leaders at the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge entrance at 7 a.m. on Saturday morning. The trip will end at 12 noon on March 2.

The trip is limited to 10 participants so be sure to register. This is especially important if the weather threatens to turn nasty.

This trip is timed to see some of the Sandhill Cranes that will be migrating through the area on the way to their breeding grounds. (Remember, there is never a guarantee of anything except a good time!)

We will also look for waterfowl on the numerous bodies of water in the Valley as well as raptors, including eagles.

In addition, this trip will be free-flowing since I will not have time or money to scout it ahead of time. Be prepared for last minute changes, back-tracking, and general flexibility.

We will likely be walking on some easy- to moderate-ability trails, maybe up to two or three miles, so be sure you are able to participate or be willing to wait patiently at the car.

You will be responsible for your own reservations and meals. We will plan to have dinner together at a restaurant on Saturday night. But arrange your own

Continued on page 2

Corvids—the birds that build forests

by *Diana F. Tomback*

Diana Tomback, Professor in the Department of Integrative Biology at the University of Colorado Denver, will be the featured speaker at the Monday, February 24 meeting of DFO.

The Corvids—crows, ravens, magpies, jays, nutcrackers—are well known for many qualities both good and maybe not so good (according to *our* values). They are among the most intelligent of birds and incredible problem solvers. Many of the species that store food for future use have remarkable spatial memories.

Many corvids are foolishly brave as individuals and as flocks, chasing birds of prey in aerial cat and mouse games. Crows, jays, and magpies are human commensals, nesting and feeding in urban environments—even recognizing individual humans! But, corvids are also notorious nest robbers and predators of small vertebrates.

Less well known is that fact that several corvids, which store thousands of tree nuts or conifer seeds per bird in the ground in shallow "caches" in late summer and fall, are responsible for the regeneration of many widespread temperate zone coniferous and deciduous forest trees. The best known seed

Continued on page 5



Diana and her colleague who studies the Eurasian Nutcracker photographed in Siberia looking at a Siberian stone pine growing in a plantation. This tree species depends on the Eurasian Nutcracker for seed dispersal. *Diana Tomback*

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

breakfasts timed for our morning meetings and bring lunches for the field.

Weather is fickle in the Valley so watch the forecast and bring appropriate clothing. Also bring scopes, binocs, and other birding necessities.

Please read the liability release on the DFO website prior to signing up for the trip.

Saturday, March 1
88th and the Platte

Leaders: Cheryl Teuton and Dan Brooke, cells 303-550-0825 or 303-912-3341, leave a message, or email <teuton@earthlink.net> or <acornwp@earthlink.net>

Meet leaders at 7:45 a.m. at the parking lot just south of the intersection of 88th and Colorado.

We'll look for lingering winter ducks, search the sky for raptors, and see what we can find in the bushes, trees, and on the riverbank. This is a paved trail; plan on walking 2–4 miles.

This will be a half-day trip, ending about noon. Bring binocs, scopes, water, and snacks. Dress for the weather. Let one of the leaders know to expect you, in case we need to cancel for weather.

Saturday, March 8
Cherry Creek State Park
Leader: Joe Roller, <joeroller9@gmail.com>

Join leader at 7:30 a.m. MST to find gulls, waterfowl, early migrants, lingering winter birds, and others. Email leader to sign up, please. Limit 16 participants.

Enter at the EAST entrance to the Park from South Parker Road. NOTE: this is NOT the

Continued on next page

New trip leader standards posted

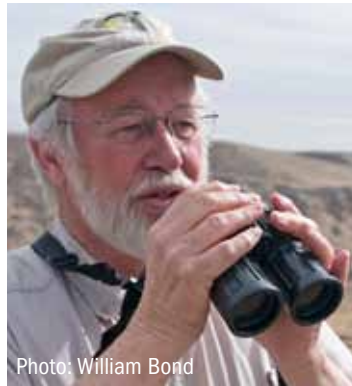


Photo: William Bord

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

The standards are intended to help DFO provide safe, enjoyable, and instructive field trips.

They have been posted on the website <http://dfobirders.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/StandardsAndBestPractices_1-23-2014-Web.pdf>.

Field trip leaders or DFO members interested in becoming trip leaders are encouraged to read the standards.

The standards are supported by a *Field Trip Leader Manual*. The manual provides ideas to help leaders implement the standards.

The manual is currently in a final edit and will be posted on this website once it has received final acceptance by the board.

Currently several leaders who went through a pilot workshop in October have been certified, and other participants will become certified leaders once they have signed an agreement to implement the standards on their trips.

During March, all current DFO trip leaders will be invited to participate in a half-day workshop that will introduce them to the standards and the manual.

The workshop will be interactive, allowing participants to engage in discussion around key standards. At the conclusion of the workshop, they will be asked to sign their agreement to adopt the standards.

The workshop will be offered on three different dates: March 1 at Belmar Library, March 15 at Arvada Library, and March 29 at Belmar Library. Leaders can pick the date that best fits their schedules.

DFO members interested in becoming leaders can also volunteer to attend a workshop. The DFO Field Trip Committee conducts the workshops and will make plans for additional workshops if needed.

Appreciation from the rosy-finches

Thanks to Scott Menough at Wild Birds Unlimited (Lakewood) for again generously donating a large bag of sunflower chips for Niña Routh's annual January rosy-finch trip to Allenspark.

DFO members help with RMBO Kids CBC

Three DFO members (Betsy Shaw, Chris Blakeslee, and Lynn Willcockson) assisted in the second annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids at Barr Lake State Park on January 3, 2014.



Red-tailed Hawk perched above kids during lunch.
Lynn Willcockson

Fifty children and 25 adults, who were split into seven groups (including a group of 3- to 6-yr-olds), counted birds around Barr Lake in unseasonal 60-degree weather.

The kids gained birding skills and information about the importance of habitat for wintering birds.

After lunching with a Red-tailed Hawk perched above them, they tallied their results and presented highlights of the day.

All who attended deemed the day a fun success with more than 11,000 individual birds counted.



DFO members Betsy Shaw, Chris Blakeslee, and Lynn Willcockson assisted in the 2014 RMBO CBC for Kids. *Lynn Willcockson*

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

regular meeting site for most previous trips.

Go past the entrance kiosk and take the first left turn. Continue on this road, past the east boat ramp and turn left to the "East Shades, Picnic Shelters," as shown on the park map, located on the east shore of the lake.

We will sign in and scope the lake from there. Walking will be kept to less than two miles on relatively flat trails. Lunch is optional. State parks pass and additional fee are required.

Bring scopes, binocs, water, snacks, and dress for the predicted weather.

Sunday, March 9, DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS TODAY Chatfield State Park

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders, 303-278-7172

Meet leaders at the swim beach at 7:30 a.m. MDT. Half-day trip until about noon. State parks pass required. Walking will be held to a minimum, a mile or less.

Bring scopes, binocs, and dress for the weather. Lunch is optional.

Look for waterfowl such as ducks and grebes, early migrants such as bluebirds, and resident birds including woodpeckers, finches, and some sparrows.

**Sunday, March 16
Barr Lake State Park
Leaders: Mark Amershek
and Bruce Neuman
Mark's Contact Info:**

**303-329-8646,
<mamershek@msn.com>**

Limit: 12 participants. Please register with leader; inclement weather might cause a change.

Continued on next page

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Meet the leaders at 7:30 a.m. at the Barr Lake State Park Visitor Center. State parks pass required or get a day pass at the park entrance.

Bring binocs, scopes, water, and dress for the weather. Walk on mostly flat concrete pathways for 3–4 miles.

We will be checking waterfowl, raptors, and early migrant birds. Possible nesting owls, hawks, and eagles could be observed.

This is a half-day trip ending about noon. There will be an opportunity for an extension trip to the DIA Loop in the afternoon. Bring lunch or snacks if continuing.

Sunday, March 23
Wheat Ridge Greenbelt
Leader: Tom Parchman,
303-274-7951

This is an excellent trip for beginners! Meet at 8 a.m. at Prospect Park in Wheat Ridge for a half-day trip. Bring water, snacks, and dress for the weather.

From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 0.75 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Ave. Go one mile west.

Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to the lake.

We'll check the lake for waterfowl before birding the paved and dirt paths along Clear Creek. The walking is easy but may involve up to two miles of walking.

Thursday, March 27
Denver Urban Birding
Leader: Chuck Thornton-Kolbe,
303-777-7588

Meet leader at 6:30 a.m. at Overland Park near Florida and

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: The passion and the payoff

Tim Johnson

Years ago, I endured first-hand the wrath of Evening Grosbeaks attempting to escape mist nets. They drew blood! So I had a personal interest in Meredith McBurney's January 27th presentation, "The Passion and the Payoff: Why We Band Birds and What We Are Learning." It was a lively program that included progress in bird tracking technology, results from Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) projects (Meredith has been on the staff since 2004), and work from UCLA's Center for Tropical Research (CTR).

Meredith briefly described the history of bird banding in North America, which took off in the early 20th century and was formalized in 1920 under the Bureau of Biological Survey (now USGS) and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The USGS Bird Banding Laboratory, at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland, is the data center for banding; their website <www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl> contains additional history and much information concerning banding procedures, data, and other topics.

In addition to banding, Meredith identified five other techniques used for bird tracking: genetic markers (e.g., mitochondrial DNA and nuclear microsatellite DNA); isotopic signatures (environmental deuterium—"heavy hydrogen"—varies predictably with latitude in the USA); radio telemetry; light level geolocators; and satellite tracking. Using Wilson's Warbler (WIWA) as a principal sample species, she presented data derived from the first four of these methodologies.

Over the last 25 years, 9000 WIWA have been caught, sexed, measured, and banded at Barr Lake. These data allowed Meredith and two students to establish robust relationships between wing length, sex, and hatch year (i.e., 1st year hatchling vs. older), which helps sex determination of problematic fall migrants. They also determined a positive correlation between total bird weight and degree of body fat, the latter quantified on a 5-point scale and measured by sharp eyes and forceful blowing on a bird's clavicular region. In addition, their data showed that hatch year birds came through the banding station earlier in the fall, and made up most (64%) of the birds over the study period. Migration dates showed little change over time; abundance data are still being analyzed.

The trouble with banding is that recoveries for most species are low. For WIWA in the period 1960–2014, 73 birds were recaptured out of 236,000 banded in the USA! For Colorado, in the period 1987–2014, 10 WIWA were recaptured out of 21,812 banded (USGS website data). (Thus, almost half the WIWA banded in Colorado were banded at Barr Lake!) These numbers illustrate the difficulty of reconstructing migration patterns from banding data. Meredith drove that point home by plotting Colorado WIWA data on a map; although individual birds showed fascinating behavior, overall movement patterns were hard to discern.

She described a CTR WIWA study employing isotope and genetic analysis which allowed much larger sample sizes, and allowed drawing of believable

Continued on page 5

CORVIDS, continued from page 1

dispersers include the Blue Jay, Eurasian Jay, Pinyon Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, and Eurasian (Spotted) Nutcracker.

These corvids play important roles in shaping forest distribution and composition, and provide us with important ecosystem services through their nut and seed caching behavior.

In good seed years, these birds store more food than they will recover for themselves and their young, leaving many nuts and seeds to germinate after snowmelt or spring and summer rains.

These birds transport nuts and seeds in their bills and in expanded throats or in neck pouches, often traveling many kilometers from seed trees to cache sites. The value of these seed dispersal services is very apparent after forest disturbance, particularly wildland fire. Long distance seed dispersal by corvids very effectively initiates forest regeneration.

The field of environmental economics is just beginning to address the importance of these "keystone" bird species in maintaining the world's forests. Other groups of birds provide many different kinds of ecosystem services as well. For an overview of these ecosystem services, I recommend the article "Follow the money" by Barry Yeoman in the 2013 March-April, "Why birds matter," issue of *Audubon*.

The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Rickson Auditorium. Enter through the west door by 7:30 p.m. We must lock the door a little after that time.



Clark's Nutcracker on limber pine cones in Alberta, Canada. *Diana Tomback*

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 4

"connectivity maps"—in essence, putative routes birds take from point to point. Several papers from this study can be found at <www.environment.ucla.edu/ctr/research/neotropical-migrants.html>. Meredith showed a connectivity map for WIWA suggesting Southern WIWA migration is to the east of the Rockies and Northern to the west.

In her last few minutes, Meredith highlighted an RMBO project in Mexico combining radio telemetry and community involvement: the Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands Birds project. To recruit Baird's and Grasshopper Sparrows for telemetry, local children walked slowly through desert vegetation to flush these secretive birds into nets. I hope they had fun, and hope that they, and the multitude of children Meredith has taught in Colorado, will embrace a conservation ethic.

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Platte. We will carpool from there so be prepared to ride as well as drive. Bird until 4 or 4:30 p.m.

Walking will be kept to two miles or less on mostly flat, easy terrain.

We will be looking for winter residents and any water birds we can find on the rivers or reservoirs.

Bring scopes, lunch, water, and dress for the predicted weather.

Saturday, March 29

Belmar Park

Leader: Karleen Schofield, 303-936-8661

Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot near the lake. Belmar Historic Park is at 800 S. Wadsworth Blvd. in Lakewood.

From Alameda and Wadsworth go south on Wadsworth, turn west at the light on West Ohio Avenue. Drive a short two blocks to the parking lot.

We'll check out the waterfowl on the lake and search for raptors and possible avocets.

Bring water, layered clothing, sun block, binocs, scopes. Restrooms are available. Be prepared to walk 3/4 to 1 mile on flat trails.

If questions or questionable weather, please call the leader.

—Scheduled by Chris Owens

Bluebird biology research is underway with help of DFO grant

by *Jessica Fish*

Denver Field Ornithologists kindly awarded \$400 in grant funding toward my master's research in bluebird biology.

The project is being conducted through Dr. Mike Wunder's lab in the integrative biology department at the University of Colorado Denver.

Project partners include the Evergreen Audubon Society, the Colorado Bluebird Project, and Castle Rock Parks and Recreation, who have contributed nest box sites, volunteer labor, and historical data to the research effort.

The goal of this research project is to investigate trade-offs between investments in immune defense, migration, and reproduction; and 2013 offered the opportunity to observe these trade-offs during the added stress of a drought year.

The breeding season is a very demanding period in the annual cycle of birds, and migratory birds have the compounded strain of migration just prior to the reproductive effort.

Drought conditions and pathogen exposures during this time also create significant physiological stress that could impact breeding success.

Therefore, we are measuring breeding output as a way of quantifying fitness trade-offs between immune defense, migration, and reproduction in the face of limited resources.

Another objective of the study is to determine winter migratory routes and locations for the populations of bluebirds breeding on our study sites.

Birds at these sites are believed to be obligate migrants, but currently there is no evidence to confirm

this. Toward this goal, we deployed geo-loggers on twenty adult birds during the 2012 breeding season.

Loggers are programmed to record solar light data, and once retrieved, can be utilized to geographical coordinates for each day that it was worn by the bird.

In May of 2013, we initiated our second field season obtaining data on mountain and western bluebirds that inhabited breeding sites in Evergreen, Castle Rock, and Larkspur, Colorado.

The field sites have established nest-box trails, and exhibit a gradient in altitude and habitat-type.

Field efforts included nest box observations, banding, and the collection of fecal and blood samples.

To ensure that clutch status was as accurate as possible, nest boxes were visited every other day at the primary sites in Evergreen and Castle Rock.

Breeding data including clutch initiation, clutch size, egg mass, nestling survival, and nestling growth rate were recorded for each occupied box and will be subjected to statistical modeling to quantify reproductive output.

Notable observations this season were that eggs were laid a few weeks later compared to previous years, and most pairs only attempted one clutch rather than the typical two or three clutches.



Taking a blood sample from a female Mountain Bluebird. *Jessica Fish*



Male Western Bluebird. *Jessica Fish*

In addition, all nestlings and captured adults were weighed and banded. For the primary sites, a total of 131 nestlings and 31 new adults were banded. Six previously banded adults were recaptured, three of which returned geo-loggers.

Continued on page 7

BLUEBIRD RESEARCH *continued from page 6*

With additional efforts in Larkspur, a total of seven geo-loggers were retrieved of the original twenty. Another logger was observed on a returning adult male at the Castle Rock site, but unfortunately, the bird went missing before we were able to retrieve it.

We plan to decipher logger data utilizing new software technology; this will be a significant undertaking and we will be working on this for perhaps the next few years.

Fecal and blood samples were also taken from most captured adults. Individuals exhibiting excessive stress were released after standard banding procedures.

Altogether, twenty-two fecal specimens and fourteen blood smears were also obtained and will be subjected to further analysis in the lab.

From these, we will generate data regarding the community structure of the gut microbiota, the presence of avian malaria parasites, and white blood cell counts; all of which will offer insight into the immune status of the birds that were sampled.

DNA extraction is currently in progress with the Miller lab at UC Denver. Thus far, the process has shown promise, and sequencing of the gut microbiome is scheduled to proceed over the next year or so.

Again, generating data from our current samples is a process that will continue for the next one to two years.

Based upon the availability of funding, we would like to extend our field efforts through the 2014 breeding season to strengthen our results.

We certainly appreciate the support of DFO, and will look forward to offering updates as we continue.

(Photographs were provided by Jessica Fish.)



Banded Mountain Bluebird nestling in basket. *Jessica Fish*



Jessica banding a female Mountain Bluebird. *Barbara Spagnuolo*



Mountain Bluebird nestling in hands. *Jessica Fish*



Jessica banding a male Mountain Bluebird. *Barbara Spagnuolo*

Colorado Birds of the Month: *March*

Ira Sanders

In March, the average high in Denver is 52 degrees and the average low is 26 degrees, up 5 and 6 degrees on the high and low from February, though we all know it can be considerably warmer and colder.

March is the snowiest month of year and I'm sure that all of us who were here in March 2003 remember the three-day blizzard that dumped seven feet of snow in Evergreen, more than four feet of snow here in Golden, and three feet of snow in parts of Denver.

The marshes of Colorado start to come alive with the beginnings of the spring thaw. Ducks and Sandhill Cranes begin congregating by the thousands at Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge in the lower San Luis valley in mid- to late March.

Plum Creek and South Platte River deltas at Chatfield State Park in Littleton as well as Cherry Creek State Park in Arapahoe County become more active as the thaw takes

hold. These are also good places for early shorebirds.

The southeast plains reservoirs like John Martin west of Lamar, Nee Noshe and Nee Granda north of Lamar, and the former Bonny State Park north of Burlington are also good places for gathering ducks, geese, and early shorebirds.

The west end of the water line at John Martin can be especially good for shorebirds though it can be hard to access.

The marshes not only have gathering waterfowl, but Marsh Wrens, and Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds start setting up house-keeping.

Western, Horned, and Eared Grebes are also present with the Horned and Eared Grebes in both basic and alternate plumages.

In Boulder County, Sombraero Marsh (if it has water) south of Arapahoe at 55th, Walden Ponds, and Sawhill Ponds are good places

for returning Tree Swallows, Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal, and Greater Scaup (can be a challenge).

In March 1997, there was a Tufted Duck at Cottonwood Marsh at Walden Pond. Walden and Sawhill Ponds are west of 75th, north of Valmont, and south of Boulder Creek.

While you're in the area, walk Boulder Creek west from 75th for Eastern Bluebirds, waterfowl, and possible Winter Wren or perhaps even a Pacific Wren.

In Weld County, Lower Latham Reservoir is a good place for marsh birds and returning teal and other waterfowl.

Shorebirds can be found on the south side of CR 48 at the south end of Lower Latham. But a word of warning: some of the locals seem to consider CR 48 their own private speedway and will speed up, drive close, and see how much dust they can kick up.

Continued on page 9



Scan the sky from the Alda Rd bridge just west of Grand Island, NE for thousands of Sandhill Cranes flying in at dusk to roost in the Platte River. *Kay Niyo*

They are also not above honking horns as they go by. So far, although this is a public road and there is no prohibition against parking on the road, the sheriff's department doesn't seem interested in doing anything about it

Park off the road if you can at the pull off at the west end of the marshes by the oil and/or gas collection facility on the south side of the road. Please do not block access to the tanks.

Directly south of Lower Latham on CR 44 and 42 can also be good for shorebirds and waterfowl.

On CR 57, north of CR 50 and east of Lower Latham, is Loloff Reservoir, which is also a magnet for shorebirds and waterfowl. It seems it is permissible to pull up to the gate at the oil and/or gas collection facility there.

Good numbers of Snow Geese can be found at the plains reservoirs, but if you really want an amazing experience, go to central Nebraska in mid-March to very early April for hundreds of thousands of Sandhill Cranes, Snow and White-fronted Geese, and maybe a pair of Whooping Cranes if you are lucky.

This is also the time of year when there have been 14 records of Common Crane in central Nebraska.

These sightings have occurred since 1972 with all but one of the records occurring between March 6



Lesser Yellowlegs seen in the snow in early spring. *Ira Sanders*

and April 6. The most recent yearly records are from 2007 through 2012 from the same areas where up to a half million Sandhill Cranes congregate during migration.

The area around Grand Island, Kearney, and Gibbon is especially good for this spectacle. See <<http://rowe.audubon.org>> for more information.

Gulls, everyone's favorite challenge, are still around and feasting off the winter fish kill. To make it more interesting, there is a mix of basic and alternate plumages to be seen.

Any of the lakes along the Front Range or eastern Colorado are a good place to practice your gull ID skills.

This is also the time of year you will notice a change of species as Chipping Sparrows return to take the place of Tree Sparrows; Swainson's Hawks replace Rough-legged,



Eastern Bluebirds can be seen along the Front Range. *Kay Niyo*

and Loggerhead Shrikes replace Northern Shrikes around the state.

March and April are prime time for chickens. Greater and Lesser Prairie Chickens can be seen on the prairies of Colorado. Greater Sage Grouse leks are near Walden, Gunnison Sage Grouse leks near Gunnison, and Sharp-tailed Grouse leks near Craig.

I thank Joey Kellner, Nick Komar, Dave Leatherman, and Loch Kilpatrick for their contributions to this month's column. Larry Semo, a much respected and greatly missed birder who passed away in 2011, also contributed to the original column in 2009.

Also, a thank you to Ross Silcock, coauthor of *Birds of Nebraska*, who provided the detailed information about the Common Crane sightings. See <<http://coloradocountybirding.com/>> and click on "Find a Site" for birding locations.

Thank you for your donation to the Research, Education and Conservation Fund:

Jeff Dawson, Diane and Jeff Carter, Ruth McCarrison and Steve Odendahl, Grace Hahn, Sonja Hahn, Barney and Pat Poole, Sue Summers, Mike Henwood, Edward Donnan, J.B. Hayes, Audrey Gilden, Bill and JoAnn Hackos, Wendy Covert, Jill Boice, Mary Keithler, Joann Pettinicchio, Diane Hutton, David Hill, Lee and Linda Farrell, Jo-Ann Garavaglia, Elissa McAlear, Minerva Canavan, Peggy Roberts, Mary Fran O'Connor

What Bird Is This?

Mary Cay Burger

Sometimes in a winter flock of basic-plumaged blackbirds you might see one that is partly rufous and has a 'Lone Ranger' mask.

It is about the same size as a Brewer's Blackbird, but both male and female Rusty Blackbird have a yellow iris. It is shorter-tailed, thinner-billed at the base, and shorter-legged than the Brewer's Blackbird.

The Rusty Blackbird breeds in the wet coniferous and mixed forests of Alaska, northern Canada, and northeastern United States. No other blackbird breeds so far north.

It feeds on mostly invertebrates during the breeding season.

During migration, it joins other blackbirds and robins feeding mostly on the ground on pine seeds, fruits, berries, and invertebrates, if available.

Northward migration through the eastern United States is during March through May. Southward



Rusty Blackbird pair feeding along Boulder Creek, Boulder Co., CO on December 22, 2013. *Bill Schmoker*

migration takes place in September through November.

A few Rusty Blackbirds can be found wintering along the Front Range where they favor woodlands more than other blackbirds.

Rusty Blackbirds have declined greatly (85–95%) over the past 40

years, which has caused increased studies into contributing factors.

Answer: Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*). Read more about the Rusty Blackbird at <<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/200doi:10.2173/bna.200>>.

DFO 2014 grant applications available

Denver Field Ornithologists offers grants in the range of \$200 to \$5000 annually. Individuals or organizations are encouraged to apply.

In the past, grants have been awarded to the East High School Bird Club; Eagle and other scouting projects; raptor rehabilitation; teacher training; ornithology camp scholarships for young people; and avian research on Black Swifts, Burrowing Owls, Mallard nest structures, bluebirds, and others.

Grant applications are processed on a first-come,

first-serve basis until each year's funds are exhausted.

Applications must be submitted to the DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Fund Committee. The application is available on the DFO website at <<http://dfobirders.org/wordpress/denver-field-ornithologists/dfo-grants/endowment-application/>>.

Please check the website for the mission statement and complete guidelines. Contact Candice Johnson at 303-329-8131 for additional information.

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February	Jackie King	303-287-1644
March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April	Scheduler needed	
May	Jackie King	303-287-1644
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
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November	Jackie King	303-287-1644
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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COBirds

Internet bird-sighting discussion list www.cfobirds.org

Colorado Rare Bird Alert

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hlif, Dick Schottler 303-659-8750

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members:

Diane Dermer, Centennial; Steve Odendahl, Boulder; Aaron Shipe, Lakewood; Amber Carver, Littleton

Upcoming Speakers

Diana Tomback Feb. 24
"Corvid Feed Dispersal"
See details on page 1

Ted Floyd March 24
"Secrets of Boulder
Revealed At Last"

Nathan Pieplow April 28
"Five Audio IDs Every
Colorado Birder Should Know"

**Kim Potter and
Jason Beason** Sept. 22
"Latest on Black Swift Research"

Bill Eden Oct. 27
"Birding in Borneo"

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 20
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 35
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$ 5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name(s) _____

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Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
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The Lark Bunting

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Featured This Month

Grant Aids Bluebird Research
DFO Members Help at Kids CBC
What Bird Is This?



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/MAY 2014/VOL 50 NO 5

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

Saturday, May 3
South Platte River Trail
Leader: Jackie King,
720-381-3314

Meet leader at the parking area at 88th and South Platte River Trail at 9 a.m.

From I-76 take E. 88th Ave. exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead.

This trip will be a half-day trip so bring water and snacks; lunch is optional.

We will walk along the trail and see which migrants are there as well as enjoy the many resident birds that should be back.

Leader uses a wheelchair for mobility so it will be accessible and easy, level walking. Good trip for new members and novice birders.

Sunday May 4
Brett Gray Ranch,
Lincoln County
Coleaders: Mark Amershek
and Bruce Neuman
Trip will be limited to 10 persons: please RSVP Mark
at 303-329-8646 or
<mamershek@msn.com>
before May 1.

Meet and carpool at 5:45 a.m. at the King Soopers parking lot on Fountain Parkway (just east of I-25) in Castle Rock, CO. Carpools will leave at 6 a.m. sharp.

We need volunteers to drive (high-clearance, 4-wheel-drive vehicles); let Mark know if you can drive.

Continued on page 2

Shhhh. Can you identify them now?



Nathan Pieplow. *Christian Nunes*

Can you identify woodpeckers by drum alone? Do you ever confuse the songs of the *Empidonax* flycatchers? Do you know what a *real* Chihuahuan Raven sounds like?

Colorado birders face a unique set of identification challenges, and at the DFO meeting on Monday, April 28, Nathan Pieplow will fine-tune our ears to help us meet them.

In a program titled "Five Audio IDs every Colorado Birder Should Know," Nathan will talk about how to separate the sounds of Williamson's and Red-naped Sapsucker; the drums of Three-toed Woodpecker; the songs of Dusky, Hammond's,

and Gray Flycatchers; the winter calls of Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Sprague's Pipit; and the calls of Common and Chihuahuan Ravens. A brief quiz at the end of the evening will help cement the skills in our brains.

Nathan lives in Boulder, where he teaches writing at the University of Colorado. An avid bird sound recordist, he is the author of the bird sound blog <<http://earbirding.com/blog/>> and the author of the upcoming *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds*. He is a former board member of the Colorado Field Ornithologists and former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*.

NOTE: The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science Planetarium. Enter through the north door by 7:30 p.m.

Please attend:

DFO members will elect officers and directors at the April 28 business meeting.

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Brett Gray is a 49,000-acre Nature Conservancy working ranch location in Lincoln County (southeast of Colorado Springs).

The driving distance from Castle Rock will be approximately 100 miles (a little over two hours).

The ranch will be birded by following the ranch roads in cars with stops to bird on level open areas (ponds, wetlands, grassland, and small creeks).

This ranch is similar in habitat to the Chico Basin Ranch with two dam ponds and wooded areas.

There are no restroom facilities at the ranch or nearby, so we will stop in east Colorado Springs on our drive down and again on our way back; plan accordingly. This will be an all-day trip so bring water and lunch.

Scopes would be handy but not necessary. Two-way radios per car would be helpful.

We will bird until 4 p.m. and should be back at Castle Rock about 6 p.m.

Saturday, May 17

Birding by Ear

Roxborough State Park

Trail: easy/moderate

Leader: Alison Kondler, 303-973-3959 (Park phone)

Meet inside the Visitor Center at 7:30 a.m.

With so many spring chirps, tweets, and chips, it can be difficult to distinguish which bird belongs to what song!

However, with a few fun techniques and a lot of practice, the art of learning birdsong can be extremely rewarding and bring us even closer to nature.

Join Alison Kondler, naturalist and ASGD Master Birder, for this unique mnemonic-driven birding-by-ear program that is

Continued on next page

Field trip dilemma: Where did Charlie go?

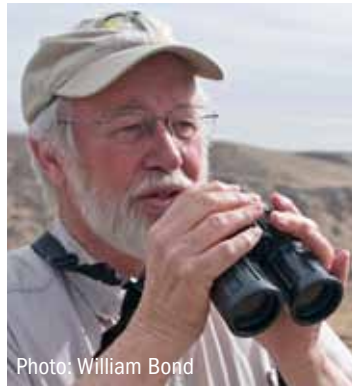


Photo: William Bord

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

If you've been on many Denver Field Ornithologists field trips, you've probably seen this more than once.

Everybody has had a good look at an interesting group of water birds and the group is about to move on. The leader does a quick silent head count, then asks, "Where did Charlie go?"

It might have been Sally, or Bob, or Mary, but it seems that sooner or later on any field trip one or more people become stragglers or disappear from the group.

On March 29, I helped Karen von Saltza and Paul Slingsby with the third of our work-

shops to introduce DFO's *Standards and Best Practices* to current and prospective field trip leaders. The *Standards and Best Practices* spell out our expectations of trip leaders. Eventually in each workshop one of the trip leaders brings up a question about how to handle a field trip participant who becomes a problem.

The birder who disappears from the group is one such problem. Other challenges for the leader can be the birders who try to get closer to the bird and spook it before everyone has had a look at it, those who delay the trip start by showing up late, and participants who distract everybody else by playing a song recording unexpectedly.

To address this issue, the DFO Field Trip Committee this year will be developing a new set of guidelines for trip participants. These guidelines will set out expectations for trip participants that will make field trips more enjoyable for them.

One of the guidelines will very likely be to stay with the group or let the leader know if you are leaving early. Another will probably deal with rapid



Mississippi Kite photographed in Bent Co., CO on May 28, 2012. *Ira Sanders*

movements. Because birds are very sensitive to slight movements, they can be easily be spooked by somebody approaching too quickly or raising an arm to point.

If you have a pet peeve about something other participants do on field trips, you can let Karen, Paul, or me know and we'll look for a way to address it in the guidelines. Meanwhile, keep an eye out for Charlie; he may be lost on the MTA.

32nd Annual Spring Bird Count

This year Denver will conduct its 32nd Annual Spring Bird Count. Denver Field Ornithologists and Audubon Society of Greater Denver sponsor this tradition.

No fees, but some sites require a State Parks pass or preregistration. Bring binoculars, scopes for the reservoir counts, field guide, and lunch.

Everyone welcome to help—more eyes see more birds.

Friday, May 9

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leader: Bob Brown, 303-791-6204

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Marina on west side (near Cherry Creek High School) in Cherry Creek State Park. State Parks pass required.

Saturday, May 10

Waterton, Downstream

Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723

Meet at 6 a.m. at Audubon Center/Discovery Pavilion (left turn immediately after turning from Wadsworth (Colo. 121) onto Waterton\ Roxborough road [4.4 miles south of C-470] and before the CPW parking lot for Waterton Canyon). 4–5 mile hike.

Wear long pants (not shorts) due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed.

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leader: Tom Halverstadt, 303-688-2442 (weekdays), <thavs1@comcast.net>

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at old entrance. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood

Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748

Meet at 6 a.m. at west (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks pass required.

Lower Bear Creek

Leader: Chuck Aid, 303-503-2973, <caid@ecentral.com>

Contact leader if you plan to go. Meet at 6 a.m. at parking lot on Morrison Road at C-470, northwest corner, next to the Conoco station.

Sunday, May 11

Barr Lake periphery

Leader: Dick Anderson, 303-757-4582

This trip does not involve much walking; good for people with limited mobility or stamina. Meet at 7:30 a.m. on access road to entrance station at Barr Lake State Park.

Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035

Call leader if you plan to go. Meet at 6 a.m. at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. Exit I-76 at Bromley Lane; go east about ¼ mile and turn right (south) on Lark Bunting Lane, to end of road. State Parks pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723

Space limited; contact leader to register.

—Scheduled by Hugh Kingery

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

not only educational, but very entertaining!

Whether you are new to bird-song identification, or an expert who needs a little fine-tuning, you'll be sure to gain valuable knowledge from this course.

We will start with an indoor presentation, and then take our newfound skills outside on an easy 1.5-mile guided bird walk in the most scenic state park in Colorado.

Habitat includes scrub oak, riparian, rock faces, and cliffs. Return time between 11 a.m. and noon.

Space is limited. **Please pre-register by calling the number above** (during park business hours).

This is a free program, but CO State Parks Pass or \$7 day fee required to enter the park. Please arrive on time as a courtesy to the other participants.

Bring binoculars, water, and snacks. See <www.BirdingByEar.com>.

Sunday, May 18

Chico Basin Ranch

Trail: moderate

Leader: Paul Slingsby, 720-347-5169,

<paslingsby@comcast.net>

Full-day trip. There will be a north Denver carpool meeting place at 6 a.m. and a south Denver carpool meeting place at 6:30 a.m.

RSVP via phone or email for meeting instructions. Limited to 12 participants.

Bring lunch and plan to be back at the south carpool meeting place by 5 p.m.

Chico Basin is a prairie oasis with off-trail (long pants) walking to visit wetland, cottonwoods, shrubs, and grassland. \$10 fee per car.

Continued on page 4

***Thank you for your donation to the Research,
Education and Conservation Fund:***

Mary Ellen Moore and John Balog

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Thursday, May 22

Prewitt SWA

Leader: Chris Owens

Home: 303-772-6048,

Cell: 970-481-7271

Meet leader at 5:30 a.m. at the RTD Park-n-Ride on the south-west corner of Highway 287 and Niwot Road.

We will return to the meeting place late afternoon or early evening, depending on our success.

We will look for migrants such as flycatchers, sparrows, and warblers as well as any water birds still around. Walking will be about 2 miles but we will traverse some rough places.

Trip is limited to 10 participants so be sure to **RSVP to <christiel@q.com> after May 1 and by May 20.**

Bring scopes, binoculars, lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. Dress for the predicted weather.

Saturday, May 24

Dawson Butte

Leader: Doris Cruze,

303-798-8072

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at the Castle Rock McDonald's Restaurant.

This will be a quick introduction to Dawson Butte, which is a gentle walking area that is slightly higher in elevation than Denver so you can expect to see mountain and foothill birds.

Bring plenty of water, snacks, and sunscreen. Lunch is optional; there are picnic tables in the area.

Sunday, May 25

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Trail: moderate

Leader: Chris Rurik,

253-225-7104,

<chrisrurik@gmail.com>

This is a 3/4-day trip. Meet at

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Change*

Tim Johnson

DFO's March 24th meeting featured an unusual presentation by Dr. Ted Floyd, editor of the ABA's *Birding* magazine and a director of Colorado Field Ornithologists.

Part fact, part tribute to local birders, and part philosophy, his overall theme was *change*: changes in bird populations, real and problematic; changes in our perspective on bird senses; and how birding can change one personally.

Beginning with a honeymoon sighting of Lewis's Woodpecker on Apple Valley Road near Lyons in 1995, he covered the significant decline in Boulder County of that bird and also the Ring-necked Pheasant and Long-Eared Owl.

Giving credit to Bill Kaempfer as an expert in avian population dynamics, he offered an explanation for Long-eared Owl's decline as competition with Great Horned Owls, whose numbers have been rising (these and other data were based on Christmas bird counts).

Some species have clearly increased, like the Eurasian Collared-Dove, and the Lesser Black-backed Gull, reported as accidental in the 1970s but a regular visitor at present.

Species undergoing what he called "stealthy increases" include the Bushtit, which was not detected breeding in Boulder County at the time of the first Breeding Bird Atlas; and the Black-chinned Hummingbird, for which breeding records exist only for the last four years.

Sometimes population changes have nothing to do with biology, like the Cackling Goose, which suddenly appeared in Colorado in 2004 thanks to its elevation to species status in 2003. Here Ted gave a bow to Steve Mlodinow, whose monograph on geese has enlightened many of us.

There are also population "changes" that may be either real or epiphenomena; examples are a surge in numbers in 2011 of Red-headed Woodpeckers and Eastern Phoebe, which Ted thought was probably real; a similar surge in numbers of Cassin's Sparrow, which Ted ascribed to the arrival of birder Christian Nunes; and increased numbers of Warbling Vireos, which, based on his own evidence from recordings, Ted thought resulted from invading Eastern Warbling Vireos.

These recordings allowed Ted to segue into his personal enthusiasm for bird calls and sonography. Using a House Sparrow's "simple chirp" as an example, he demonstrated software that lowered the chirp's pitch and expanded its duration, revealing unexpected complexity and suggesting that the birds would experience it very differently than the human ear.

In a fascinating but all-too-short aside, he suggested that birds (and other animals) might experience synesthesia, in this case activation of the visual cortex by sound, so that sound could actually be seen; and that this might occur in bats or electric eels where electric fields take the place of sound.

Direct evidence apparently does exist for visual perception of magnetic fields by birds. Ted emailed me that there is evidence that Sooty Shearwaters can visualize olfactory information. Perhaps more on this in the future!

Finally, Ted read a portion of his recent essay ("Birding on the Dark Side," *Colorado Birds* 48(1):65-71 [Winter 2014]). Please read the whole article; my arid recap cannot capture Ted's personality and perspective.

What Bird Is This?

Mary Cay Burger and Kay Niyo

This spring when you are driving near a prairie dog colony or prairie pasture that has been grazed to very short grass or maybe even a plowed field, watch for a 9-inch bird that trills or whistles.

It has buffy to bright white underparts, a white face with black lores, and black eyes.

The deep rufous mantle, scapulars, lesser and median coverts are worn or fade to tan during spring migration. The hindneck and top of the head are buffy white.

The **Mountain Plover** is a North American endemic that breeds on the western Great Plains and in the Great Basin.

It was first collected by John Kirk Townsend in 1834 along the Sweetwater River of Wyoming and was misnamed by John J. Audubon as the Rocky Mountain Plover.

Its nests are on bare ground and blend into the landscape. In eastern Colorado you probably would find the Mountain Plover in a plowed field, glacial pavement, or buffalo grass prairie.

An interesting breeding behavior is that the male digs many nest scrapes within the territory, but only two of them are used.

The female lays usually three eggs in each of two nests, one of which her mate incubates and the other is incubated by the female. Only one brood per adult is raised each year.

The Mountain Plover was listed as a Candidate Species for Threatened or Endangered Species under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, but that status was withdrawn in 2003 based on more recent research information.

Read more at <<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/211>>. Check <<http://www.karval.org/>> for information on the **8th Annual Mountain Plover Festival** in Karval, CO on April 25–26, 2014.



Typical Mountain Plover nest with one pipped egg in site described below.
Kay Niyo



Mountain Plover chick (about 7 days old) just banded by Stephen J. Dinsmore in 2003. Kay Niyo



Mountain Plover adult near well-camouflaged nest with eggs in glacial pavement, southern Phillips Co., MT in 2003, on one of Stephen J. Dinsmore's (Iowa State University) long-term research sites. Kay Niyo

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

the King Soopers at 100 Founders Parkway, Castle Rock at 7:30 a.m.

To get there from Denver, take I-25 south to Founders Pkwy/Meadow Pkwy in Castle Rock (Exit 184).

Turn left onto Meadows Pkwy. Continue over the I-25 bridge onto Founders Pkwy to the stoplight (Allen Way 0.02 miles).

Turn right onto Allen Way (a Sonic is on the corner). Turn right just past the car wash (right side) to the NW corner of the King Soopers parking lot.

We will carpool into the state park from the King Soopers.

There is a \$7 per vehicle fee unless you have a State Parks pass. Bring lunch and plenty of water. We should finish around 2 p.m.

This will be a leisurely hike of about 3 miles on well-maintained but uneven trails through the canyon's Ponderosa pine, foothill shrubland, shortgrass prairie, and riparian habitats.

Expect an interesting mix of breeding birds and late migrants, with the possibility of seeing Virginia's Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, Black-headed Grosbeak, Prairie Falcon, and many others.

Monday, May 26

Pawnee National Grasslands

Trail: easy

Leader: Chuck Hundertmark, 303-604-0531

Meet leader at 7 a.m. at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 Broadway.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

This will be an all-day trip so

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

bring lunch and drinking water. About 200–250 miles driving.

Please call or email leader at chundertmark8@gmail.com if you are planning to go.

Should see a nice variety of grassland birds and migrants.

Saturday, May 31

Lair o' the Bear

Leader: Niña Routh, 303-987-8687

Meet at 8 a.m. at the west end of the Lair parking lot for our annual trek (half-day trip) to see who's flown in for the season.

Probably vireos, warblers, assorted goldfinches, hummers, towhees, foothill/mountain species including dippers, and hopefully a lot of avian nesters in the bunch.

Plan on 2–3 miles of hiking on a single track in foothills area in coniferous/juniper/aspen and riparian habitats.

Bring binocs, water, sunscreen, snacks. Dress for changeable weather.

Intense study of the creekside habitat and feeders at Bear Creek Restaurant in Kittredge for lunch.

Hwy 285 So/West or C-470 to Morrison (Hwy 74), continue through Morrison and westward past the speed trap in Idledale and a few more miles up the highway; entrance is on the left.

This is a **limited trip, reservations only. Call Niña at 303-987-8687.**

—Scheduled by Jackie King

Colorado Birds of the Month: May

Ira Sanders

In May, the average high in Denver is 71 degrees and the average low is 44 degrees, up 9 degrees on the high and low from April, although it has reached 96 and fallen to 22.

Heavy rains and Front Range flooding caused by cyclonic storms carrying Pacific and Gulf moisture can occur in May. In 1969 a storm dropped 10 inches of rain on the Denver suburbs.

Denver's record 24-hour rainfall of 6.53 inches fell in May 1876. The major storms of September 2013 did not surpass this amount in Denver. A May record for Colorado of 107 degrees was set in Holly, CO in 1996.

May is the month for birding just about anywhere in the state. The more you get out the more you will see.

Early in the morning check the trees and bushes where you live and you could be surprised by what you find.

Your local park can host warblers and vireos as well as grosbeaks and tanagers. Even small parks in your neighborhood like the Welchester Tree Park in Lakewood, located on 8th Ave between Simms and Indiana, can hold great birds like Blackburnian Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Ovenbirds can be found in the brush and waterthrushes along the creek. All of the western *Empidonax* (except Pacific-slope) flycatchers can be found here and who knows, maybe even a rare eastern cousin like an alder or yellow-bellied could be found.

I've seen many migrants in Chees-

man Park in Denver during lunch-time walks. This is where Thompson Marsh, a Colorado legend, was almost arrested many years ago when a Denver police officer found him in a tree trying to get better looks at the birds.

Flammulated Owls can be heard along the foothills west and north of Golden to Lyons. I have heard them in the lower parts of Golden Gate Canyon State Park and just above White Ranch Open Space Park starting at about 10 p.m.

I have had luck hearing the small owls on Crawford Gulch Road, which you can access from Golden Gate Canyon Rd off Hwy 93 on the north edge of Golden.

Other places to look and listen for these owls are Mt. Falcon Park, Boulder Mountain Park, and the St. Vrain canyons west of Lyons.

When listening for the Flammulated, also listen for Saw-whet and Northern Pygmy-Owls. Poorwill's are also calling in the evening along the foothills. Boreal Owls can still be heard at Cameron Pass.

Migrant traps on the plains can be especially rewarding. The Last Chance rest area (Colorado 71 and U.S. 36) about 60 miles east of Denver can be incredible.

I have seen Blackpoll, Palm, and Black-throated Blue Warbler there as well as Golden-crowned and White-throated Sparrows (May 7, 2007) and Tammy and I had a Louisiana Waterthrush on May 9, 1999. A Connecticut Warbler has also been found here.

Another great migrant trap is Crow Valley Campground at Briggsdale, Colorado. Almost every war-

Continued on page 7



Prothonotary Warbler at Centennial Park. Arapahoe Co., CO. *Ira Sanders*

bler species and I believe every vireo species seen in Colorado has been seen here at one time or another.

A Costa's Hummingbird was seen here once and hundreds of thrushes, including gray-cheeked, can be seen. A Varied Thrush has been here in the fall.

Hasty Campground at John Martin Reservoir 25 miles west of Lamar can be jumping with Mississippi Kites roosting, Orchard Orioles nesting, and many migrant warblers.

A Painted Bunting was seen in May 2000. Grosbeaks and tanagers are frequently found.

Don't forget to check the mudflats and stretches of sand at John Martin Reservoir for shorebirds. Piping Plover and Least Tern nest here; the sand areas along the reservoir can be off limits to protect these endangered species' nesting areas.

You can walk the edge of the enclosures to look for the plovers and easily see Least Terns as they fly along the shore.

If you are lucky you may run into Duane Nelson who has been

researching and protecting the terns and plovers for many years. If he has time he may be able to tell you the best areas to look for the plovers without disturbing them. Also watch for Snowy Plovers, which are more common than the Piping.

The area behind Lamar Community College has been a great place in the past for rarities like Mourning and Prairie Warblers. Northern Cardinal (already reported

this year) and Carolina Wren are regulars.

Willow Creek Park just north and east of the college is also a great spot you shouldn't miss. Mississippi Kites nest here and Red-headed Woodpeckers can be found in the big trees at the northwest part of the park where they are common.

The Lamar Cemetery at the south side of town hosts Lesser Nighthawk and plenty of migrants.

As long as you are in the southeast part of the state, check the area below the dam at Two Buttes (Baca County), if it is accessible, for rarities like Wood Thrush and Golden-winged, Black-throated Green, and Cerulean Warblers (a real rarity). Also look for the Barn Owls that roost in the cliffs.

Straight north of here in Yuma County, is Bonny State Wildlife Area (formerly a state park) where the campground areas and the area to the west and south of the former lake can host a large number of migrants.

I once had a Red-tailed Hawk and

Swainson's Hawk take turns harassing a full grown Wild Turkey, who wasn't very happy about it.

Places closer to Denver with great birding include Barr Lake State Park (Adams County), Chatfield State Park (Jefferson and Douglas Counties), Cherry Creek State Park (Arapahoe County), Castlewood Canyon State Park (Douglas County), Belmar Park, Red Rocks Park, and the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (Jefferson County).

Dixon Lake in Larimer County seems to get more than its share of migrants and rarities, and Pueblo City Park and Valco Ponds State Park west of Pueblo should be checked.

Lower Latham Reservoir near LaSalle, Loloff Reservoir just northeast of Lower Latham, and Beebe Draw south of Lower Latham, all in Weld County, may be the best places to look for shorebirds this spring in the Front Range area.

Union Reservoir in western Weld County is also a site that shouldn't be overlooked. This is the time of year to look for White-rumped Sandpipers as they make their annual pass through Colorado and keep your eyes open for Red-necked Phalaropes.

Since almost everyone has Internet access, we recommend that you check COBirds frequently for postings of rarities. Good birds can be anywhere in May.

I thank Joey Kellner and Karl Stecher for their contributions to this month's column. See <<http://coloradocountybirding.org/>> and click on "Birding Locations" to find birding sites.

Sibley Guide to Birds Second Edition: Still the best

Review by Chuck Hundertmark

The Sibley Guide to Birds, Second Edition

David Allen Sibley
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2014

It was some time before I realized how brilliant the placement of a Red-tailed Hawk on the cover of *The Sibley Guide to Birds* first edition was.

Over the years, I realized that the two pages devoted to red-taileds in the guide precisely exemplified what makes the Sibley guide the best in the highly competitive arena of North American field guides.

With seven subspecies and color morphs illustrated in 39 different views, Sibley simply offers more views of this highly variable raptor than any other general field guide.

If you are working on your raptor ID skills, this means you are more likely to find the red-tailed you are looking at in the field guide.

When I first bought my Sibley, like many birders I balked at carrying it the field because of the size and weight.

After a few times running to the car for a tough ID after another smaller field guide failed to provide help, however, I started carrying Sibley in the field.

Occasionally now when I lead a field trip, the opportunity arises to show other birders why it is worth an extra pound or so of weight to carry Sibley. Sibley illustrates more plumages of North American birds than any other field guide.

In the field, a birder will see some bird plumages that they won't find in other field guides but will find in Sibley. That was true of the first edition and is even truer of the second.



Chuck Hundertmark, right, talks with David Allen Sibley before an audience of 125 at the Tattered Cover April 3.
Lynn Willcockson

The Red-tailed Hawk pages are a good place to start looking at the differences between the two editions.

All of the illustrations from the first edition are still here. The page layout has changed a bit. The header spanning the columns at the top of each page is gone, leaving more room for the illustrations.

At the top of the second page is a pair of new illustrations showing a partial albino red-tailed. Denver area birders who saw the partial albino that frequented the Legacy Ridge Golf Course area for many years will recognize this bird.

The albino red-tailed illustrations are among the more than 600 new images, including 111 rare species, which are included in the second edition.

In addition, Sibley revised more than half of the illustrations from the original guide.

Other improvements to the range maps, text, and layout have been noted in the promotional materials for the book and in other reviews (e.g., <http://naturetravelnetwork.com/book-review-sibley-guide-birds-second-edition/>).

These include more complete coverage of rarities likely to be seen along

the Mexican border, in Alaska, or on a pelagic trip.

Lost in the second edition are the callout lines pointing to key field marks. Some birders have also found the lighter, smaller text font a problem.

On his website, author-illustrator David Allen Sibley has acknowledged this issue to be addressed in a future printing.

More troublesome with the first printing of this second edition, however, is the problem of color in the illustrations; many are too dark.

The Scarlet Tanager male on p. 541 has been mentioned as one example. Though the text description calls out the bird's "brilliant red," the illustration would best be described as "dull red."

While annoying, this color print problem probably wouldn't lead to confusion in the field.

The Pacific and Winter Wren illustrations on p. 413, however, are a problem. In the illustrations of both of these species, the richness of the browns is lost.

The rufous that helps separate the Pacific Wren from the Winter Wren is barely distinguishable. For Colorado birders, trying to ID one of these small wrens in the field, this printing of the Sibley guide will be less than helpful.

The second edition Sibley is hardly the first field guide to have color problems with the first printing. Some birders have embraced the darker colors of the second edition.

I'm hoping there will be some changes in these darker colors for the next printing. In the meantime, I'm going to give the second edition a try in the field.

For birders heading to the Texas or Arizona border, Alaska or Monterey Bay, the guide will be a must.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April		
May	Jackie King	720-381-3314
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
August	Jackie King	720-381-3314
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Jackie King	720-381-3314
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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COBirds	
Internet bird-sighting discussion list	www.cfobirds.org

Colorado Rare Bird Alert	
Joyce Takamine, Alison Hlif, Dick Schottler	303-659-8750

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members:

David Suddjian, Littleton; Nicholas Faraco-Hadlock, Conifer

Welcome back: Steve and Debbie Kennedy, Aurora; Jennifer Callender, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Nathan Pieplow April 28
“Five Audio IDs Every
Colorado Birder Should Know”

Bob Shade Aug. 25
“Birds of Japan”

**Kim Potter and
Jason Beason** Sept. 22
“Latest on Black Swift Research”

Bill Eden Oct. 27
“Birding in Borneo”

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$	20
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$	35
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$	5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$	_____
Total	\$	_____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

☐ **Do not publish in roster.**

Email (legible) _____

☐ **Do not publish in roster. (Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)**

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting
Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742
Featured This Month
Where Did Charlie Go?
Spring Bird Count
2nd Sibley: Still the Best



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/JUNE 2014/VOL 50 NO 6

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

Sunday, June 1
Lyons Area, Boulder and
Larimer County
Leader: Raymond Davis

Join Davis in Lyons for some post-migration birding.

Meet at the Lyons Park-n-Ride just south of 4th and Main St. (by the skateboard park and visitor center w/bathrooms) at 8:30 a.m.

Probably no rarities, but should get good looks at nesting birds around Lyons and in Davis's 35 birdhouses.

Might see bobolink, herons, 4 swallows, 1-2 eagles, 2 wrens, 2 chickadees, 4-6 finches, 3 jays, 3 woodpeckers, 2 bluebirds, 2 nuthatches, dipper, grosbeak, catbird, 3 flycatchers, 3-4 sparrows, hummingbirds, and much more.

We'll check out the flood damage and see how (warning: baseball analogy) Mother Nature bats last!

Walk level ground for 1-3 miles, bird by car, and then eat lunch on Davis's decks until we get bored.

Good photo opportunities likely, and all are welcome. Wheelchair accessible.

Saturday, June 7
Reynolds Park and Pine Valley
Ranch, Jefferson County
Coleaders: Mark Amershek
(303-329-8646,
<mamershek@msn.com>)
and Bruce Neuman
Limit: 10 people.
RSVP Mark before June 1.
Full-day trip from 7:30 a.m. to 4

Continued on page 2

Website redesigned, officers elected

by Lynn Willcockson

DFO President Chuck Hundertmark opened the April 28 annual business meeting in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science Planetarium. It was a full house and the agenda included several business items.

The Board of Directors has hired Ann Johnson to redesign our website. Ann has been the web designer for Colorado Field Ornithologists and other bird organizations in Colorado and other states. The new design will be seen in the near future.

DFO received 12 applications for grants totaling \$26,000, more requests than in previous years. Seven applications totaling \$6500 were recommended to the board by the Grants Committee and were approved. (See p. 5.)

The latest news on the proposed changes at Chatfield can be found on the <www.savechatfield.org> website.

Bill Wuerthele, from the Nominating Committee, provided the nominees for officers and the board. The individuals were nominated at the March meeting and because there were no further nominations from the floor the following were elected:

Officers (one-year term): Charles Hundertmark, President; Bob Shade, Vice President; Mary Geder, Treasurer; Kay Niyo, Secretary; Mary Cay Burger, Membership Chair. Board of Directors (three-year term): Tina Jones, Ira Sanders, Karen von Saltza, Lynn Willcockson.



What Bird Is This?
See page 8.
Alistair Montgomery

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

p.m. Meeting location and trip details will be announced at sign up.

The morning will be spent at Reynolds Open Space and then we will drive up to Pine Valley Ranch for lunch and more birding.

Certain parts of the trails are narrow and steep and can be difficult walking, especially at Reynolds. Total walking is about 5 miles for both locations.

Bring water, sunscreen, lunch.

Sunday, June 8

**Fairmount Cemetery/
Highline Canal**

**Leader: A. J. Gest,
303-994-2420, <offsetaj@comcast.net> preferred
Dearly Departed Birding Tour
Limit: 16 people. Preregister
with leader.**

Meet leader at 7:30 a.m. at Fairmount Cemetery. Use the Quebec St. entrance (west side). Address is 403 S. Quebec St., Denver.

We will be in the parking lot near the Chapel in the Pines. Join us as we walk among some of Denver's most famous and infamous legends, in what is listed as Colorado's largest outdoor arboretum.

This will be an easy 1.5- to 2-mile walk on paved drives and pathways.

This area has the potential for a good variety of summer song birds, as well as our backyard regulars.

Bring water, binocs, hat, and sunscreen; scopes are optional. Restrooms are available in the Mausoleum after 9 a.m. so plan accordingly.

The trip should end about 11–11:30 a.m.

Continued on next page

Denver City Park: a Darwinian laboratory

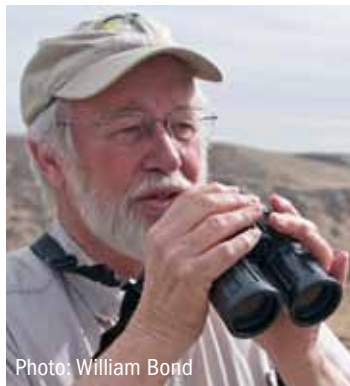


Photo: William Bord

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

I've come to think of Denver City Park as a Darwinian laboratory. The lab rats there have feathers.

If you visit City Park in late winter, you find the Canada Geese getting energetic. With outstretched necks, bills open, the hissing males chase one another. The competition is intense and the reason is simple; resources in the park are at once abundant and scarce.

Grass for grazing is abundant, so the park can feed a goodly number of geese. Safe nesting sites, however, are limited to islands in Ferril and Duck Lakes. Despite limited

nest sites, though, the impulse for the geese to reproduce becomes intense as the photoperiod lengthens in late winter.

Curious about where these geese might be attempting to nest, I set up a little field trial at the end of a DFO City Park field trip. A few summers before, Paul Slingsby and I along with other ColonyWatch volunteers found a Canada Goose nest in a tall cottonwood in North Park. The supporting structure was apparently an abandoned raptor nest.

So, in November 2012, a half dozen DFO field trip participants spread out through City Park to see if we could spot any used tree nests large enough to support a goose nest. Our effort was singularly unproductive.

The following spring, I received an interesting email. Jared Del Rosso, who had participated in the November field trip, remembered the question about geese nesting in trees.

On May 12, 2013, Jared emailed me that in Washington Park, "... there ap-

Continued on page 3



Goose nest in Washington Park tree. Jared Del Rosso



Goose with goslings, Washington Park. *Chuck Hundertmark*

FROM THE PRESIDENT, *continued from page 2*

peared to be a Canada goose family residing in a tree.” He went on to report, “While I didn’t see an actual nest, I did see two adult geese and young in a large tree along the walking trail on Grasmere Lake.”

Jared had just begun birding in April 2012, shortly before coming to Colorado. On April 29 this year, he sent me this report, “This evening, I came upon a goose that appears to be nesting in a cavity in a tree at the park.” The email included two photos that confirm the goose nesting in the tree. On the 23rd, he reported another goose nest in the fork of a tree.

The fate of those two nests is uncertain as I write. And the question remains open whether there are tree nesting geese at City Park. While chasing rarities will remain a passion for Front Range birders, there are many interesting bird questions to be explored in our urban and suburban environments.

New species named for DFO member

Long-time DFO member Jeff Stephenson recently had a new species of millipede named for him. Jeff is the Zoology Collections Manager at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS) and serves as the liaison between DFO and the museum.

In October 2012, DMNS Research Associate David Steinmann was scouring Bonnie’s Hall Cave in Eagle County looking for invertebrates when he found a 14 millimeter long millipede. The critter belonged to the genus *Austrotyla*, which is represented by several species in the Rocky Mountains, but no known cave specialists.

Like many species of cave arthropods, the new millipede had reduced pigmentation and longer legs than its relatives as well as fewer eye spots or ocelli.

Steinmann and colleague William A. Shear, of Virginia’s Hampden-Sydney College, described the new species in the journal *Zootaxa* naming it *Austrotyla stephensoni*.

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Sunday, June 8

Cherry Creek Wetlands Loop

Leader: Karen von Saltza, cell 303-941-4881

NOTE: This is a regularly conducted field trip the 2nd Sunday of each month.

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd. to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional.

Beginning birders are welcome. No registration required. Cosponsored with Denver Audubon.

Saturday, June 14

Roxborough State Park, Birding By Ear

Trail: Easy/Moderate

Leader: Alison Kondler, <BirdingByEar@msn.com>

Space is limited. Preregister by calling 303-973-3959 (Park #) during park business hours.

Meet outside the Roxborough SP Visitor Center at 7 a.m. Return time 11 a.m.–12.

Whether new to birdsong identification or an expert, you’ll gain valuable knowledge as we walk and listen for birds.

Habitat includes scrub oak, riparian, rock faces, and cliffs. Specific hiking trail to be determined on day of hike (based on weather and guest needs).

This is a free program, but a State Parks pass or \$7 day pass required.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Please arrive on time and cancel ahead of time if you are not able to make it (waiting list).

Bring binocs, water, sturdy footwear, and snacks. Lunch optional. For more information: <BirdingByEar.com>.

Sunday, June 15
Staunton State Park,
Jefferson County

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders, 303-278-7172

Limit: 25 people; we will be car pooling. Preregister with leaders.

Meet at Morrison Park-n-Ride on the NW corner of C-470 and Morrison Road (CO 8) at 6:30 a.m. for car-pooling. The drive is about 40 minutes up U.S. 285 near Pine Junction.

This trip to Staunton State Park has potential for breeding species: Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsuckers, Olive-sided and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Tree and Violet-green Swallows, Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Lincoln's Sparrow, and others.

State Parks pass is needed or \$7 at entrance. This will be a ¾-day trip.

Saturday, June 21
Bergen Park 7,800 ft.
(Jefferson County)
and Echo Lake 10,600 ft.
(Clear Creek County)

Leader: Lynn Willcockson,
303-757-7000,
<lynnliz2698@aol.com>

Limit: 12 people.

Preregister with leader.

Beginners welcome. Trip may include Summit Lake 12,834 ft. (Clear Creek County) depending if any events are scheduled on Mt. Evans on that day. Easy walking (~3 miles total) on level surfaces but at various elevations.

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: Bird Sounds

Lynn Willcockson

Nathan Pieplow presented a fascinating program on bird sounds at the April 28 DFO meeting. Nathan teaches writing at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He is a former board member of Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO) and former editor of *Colorado Birds*, the CFO journal. Nathan was introduced to birding when his family lived in the Black Hills and has been interested in bird sounds for many years. His blog site <www.earbirding.com> focuses on recording, identifying, and interpreting bird sounds.

Nathan's topic was "Five Audio IDs Every Colorado Birder Should Know." The birds included woodpeckers and sapsuckers, prairie birds, *Empidonax* flycatchers, and ravens.

We learned that drums of the Three-toed Woodpecker speed up and are softer at the end. The Red-napped Sapsucker ends its drumming with slowing double taps toward the end, although they may actually sound like single taps. The Williamson's Sapsucker produces a long burst of fast taps at the beginning and then slowing, shorter bursts of taps toward the end.

The prairie bird songs of Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Sprague's Pipit were more difficult. These species produce spectrograms that resemble vowels and consonants according to Nathan. Spectrograms help separate these often faint calls.

Nathan provided bad/good news about the difficult-to-identify *Empidonax*. Many look almost the same, but they don't sound the same. Spectrograms and habitat can help separate these confusing birds.

The Least Flycatcher uses only one phrase type. The Gray Flycatcher uses two phrase types, ABAB. The dusky, Hammond's, cordilleran, and willow all use three phrase types, ABC.

Nathan helped us separate the
Continued on page 5



Figure 1. John Alden's delightful "doodle"!

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, *continued from page 4*

Chihuahuan Raven from the Common Raven. The Chihuahuan call is usually more nasal, fairly rough, medium pitched, varies little, and rises slightly at the end. The Common Raven call often has a two syllable sound, low and high, and is not uprising at the end.

Nathan tested us on ten of the bird sounds and we were to identify each. Only four birders of the "full house" were able to correctly identify all ten! Congratulations to John Alden, Bob Righter, Dean Shoup, and Paul Slingsby!

To our surprise, John Alden handed Paul Slingsby his 10 correct answers with a delightfully "doodled" Canada Goose nesting in a tree (Figure 1) drawn as he listened to Chuck's story (see page 2)!

Nathan is the author of the upcoming *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds*. The 2015 edition will be on eastern birds. In 2016 he will publish a guide to bird sounds of western birds.

DFO awards grants to 7 projects

by Candice Johnson, Carol Cochran, Tina Jones

This year, DFO awarded \$6557.93 in grant funds to seven very high quality projects.

Each was consistent with the Fund's Mission to "encourage the study, the appreciation and/or preservation of birds and their habitats...in the Denver metropolitan area, the Colorado Front Range, the State of Colorado, and the United States [in order of preference]."

The seven projects represent geographical diversity and a diversity of needs: conservation education particularly to the underserved Latino population; improvement of such crucial habitats as shortgrass prairie or riparian corridors; research with the potential to improve the survivability of such critical species as Black Swift, McGown's Longspurs, or Flammulated Owls.

These are the projects awarded and the principle investigators:

- Flammulated Owl Fall Migration, Ross Calhoun and Max Ciaglo
- Impact of Adaptive Grazing Management on the Nest Survival of a Shortgrass Specialist: McCown's Longspur, Amber Carver, University of Colorado, Denver
- Eastern Screech Owl Citizen Science Monitoring within the Fort Collins Poudre River Urban Corridor, Phase 2, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
- Comparing Bird Diversity and Abundance on Grasslands with Bison and Cattle in the Southern Great Plains, Denver Zoo
- Dodd Reservoir Restoration, Boulder County Audubon Society
- Breeding Phenology and Nesting Success of Black Swift in Box Canyon, Ouray, Colorado: An Update, Carolyn Gunn, DVM
- Engaging People in Bird and Habitat Conservation, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

In time, members will learn much more about these important projects through reports in *The Lark Bunting*, talks at DFO meetings, or field trips to the sites.

All recipients expressed deep appreciation to DFO member donors, whose generous support made this funding possible.

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Bring lunch, water, hat, jacket, and sunscreen.

Expect to see Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Clark's Nutcracker, Gray Jay, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, Wilson's Warbler, and White-crowned Sparrow.

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at Fillius Park. Go west on I-70 to exit 252 onto Evergreen Parkway (Hwy 74). Go 2 miles on Hwy 74 to traffic light and turn right into Fillius Park. Park at the Shelterhouse.

Trip will conclude midafternoon.

Sunday, June 22

Rocky Mountain National Park
Leader: Mary Cay Burger, 303-771-3431,

<mcburger3@juno.com>

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Park Visitor Center, east of Beaver Meadows park entrance on U.S. Highway 36. A ¾-day trip.

Bring lunch, water, and clothes for changeable weather. You will need a national parks pass or pay entry fee per car. Hope to see ptarmigan and sapsuckers.

Please contact the leader for other details.

Saturday, June 28

Lair o' the Bear Park,
Jefferson County

Leader: Karleen Schofield,
303-936-8661

Limit: 10 people. RSVP leader
after June 10.

Meet at 7 a.m. at the park. From Morrison drive 4 miles west on Hwy 74 to park entrance on the left.

Riparian/foothill scrub habitats with ponderosa pine will be buzzing with nesting, feeding, and fledging activity of dippers, flycatchers, vireos, grosbeaks, goldfinches, hummingbirds, and much more.

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

Trails are narrow in places with approximately 200-ft elevation gain and loss on the loop away from and above Bear Creek.

Wear walking shoes and expect to share the trail with runners, bikers, and horses.

There are composting toilets near the parking lot. This is a half-day trip of 2.5 to 3 miles.

Bring water, sunscreen, snacks, and binocs. It will be chilly at 7 a.m. but hot later.

Sunday, June 29

Cherry Creek State Park

Leader: Karen von Saltza, 303-941-4881

Limit: 20 participants.

Preregister with the leader.

Join leader at 8 a.m. on east side of Cherry Creek SP.

We will be entering on the east side of the park and working our way SW around the reservoir. This should provide our best light for morning birding and photography.

There will be walking and car caravans as we look for birds on the prairie and riparian areas.

Enter at the EAST entrance to the park from South Parker Road. NOTE: this is not the regular meeting site for most previous trips.

Go past the entrance kiosk and take the first left turn. Continue on this road past the east boat ramp and turn left to the "East Shades, Picnic Shelters" located on the east shore of the lake as shown on the park map.

We will sign in and commence the trip from there. Walking will be less than 2 miles on relatively flat trails. Lunch is optional.

State Parks pass and additional fee are required.

Bring scopes, binocs, water, snacks, hat, and dress for the predicted weather. This is a half-day trip.

—Scheduled by Mary Geder

Colorado Birds of the Month: *June*

Ira Sanders

In June, the average high in Denver is 81 degrees and the average low is 52 degrees, up 10 and 8 degrees on the high and low from May, although it reached 104 in 1994 and fell to 30 in 1951.

Historically, eastern Colorado's tornado season marked by severe thunderstorms and high winds begins in June.

In 1977, a tornado in southeastern Colorado produced 260 mph winds and on June 13, 1984, hailstones as big as grapefruit fell on Denver causing \$500 million damage.

The beginning of June marks the end of passerine migration; the local birds are nesting and feeding young.

Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs are nesting on the Pawnee Grasslands and although the McCown's are easier to find, the chestnut-collared are there if you know to look in the taller mid-grass prairie.

One such area is southeast of the intersection of U.S. Hwy 85 and Weld County Road 114, near the USDA High Plains Research Station.

As I understand it, there is a Central Plains Environmental Range (CPER) sign on the gate that directs folks to a building two miles east to ask for permission to enter.

If you do find the birds there, look for the black V inside the white tail feathers and the all-black under parts of the chestnut-collared male as he skylarks overhead.

While you are in the area, head east to the short buffalo and blue grama grass prairie for the McCown's Longspur while watching for Burrowing Owl, Brewer's and

Grasshopper Sparrows, as well as Loggerhead Shrike.

Orchard Orioles are not the easiest bird to find on the Front Range, but I have consistently found them at Barr Lake State Park, just off I-76 east of Brighton.

The meadow west of the Nature Center footbridge near the Neidrach Trail is a good place as well as the open area east of the banding station and west of the Pioneer Trail.

Don't forget to watch the prairie east of the Denver-Hudson Canal for Bullock's and Orchard Orioles. But don't rule out Baltimore Oriole as the Bullock's eastern cousin has also been seen here in recent years. (See *What Bird Is This*, page 8.)

At least one pair of Blue Grosbeaks has been seen in recent years in the prairie and along the canal east of the footbridge.

If you want to bird in the mountains to escape the early summer heat and see birds that don't normally nest on the front range, the Alfred M. Bailey Bird Nesting Area in the Arapahoe National Forest is a mecca for high altitude birds.

Nesting birds include Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsuckers; Three-toed Woodpecker; Olive-sided, Dusky, and Cordilleran Flycatchers; Gray and Steller's Jays; Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches; MacGillivray's Warbler; and Fox, Lincoln's, and White-crowned Sparrows.

You may also find Pine Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch, and Red Crossbill.

To get to the Alfred M. Bailey area, take I-70 to exit 205 (Dillon) and take Hwy 9 north for 7.4 miles and turn left on Rock Creek Road.

Continued on page 7



Fox Sparrow in Red Rocks Park, above; Black-headed Grosbeak in Golden, left. *Ira Sanders*

Drive 1.2 miles west to a sign for Rock Creek Trailhead where you turn left and continue for 1.5 miles to the parking area.

This road is steep and narrow and not recommended for trailers.

Hike the Rock Creek Trail for 0.5 mile to one of several paths that will take you into the 7-acre meadow.

Make sure you take lots of bug spray or even mosquito netting as this area is great for birds but also for biting and sucking bugs.

Hepatic Tanager is a Colorado rarity that is becoming easier to find in the state.

They are gaining a foothold near Kim, Colorado on a private ranch, but a public area where they were first found in 2003 is just off I-25 at exit 42 south of Walsenburg.

At this exit, there is a road on the

west side of the highway that goes south for a short distance and then curves west and crosses railroad tracks. Park here and watch the trees to the north of the road for the tanagers.

While you are in this area and have already made the trek to the southern part of the state, be sure to stop and bird at Lathrop State Park west of Walsenburg on Hwy 160. Watch out for bears while you are walking through the junipers.

Although the hectic pace of May is behind us, rarities still show up in Colorado as evidenced by the Lawrence's Goldfinch that was in Grand Junction in 2007.

On an entomological note, fireflies can be found in late June and early July in Colorado in muggy wetlands at lower elevations.

The Colorado Nature Almanac tells me that these reminders of my childhood in Illinois can be found at Valley View Hot Springs at the north end of San Luis Valley (largest population of fireflies in the state); Comanche National Grassland; Picture Canyon south of Springfield; Bonny State Park north of Burlington on the south shore of the reservoir; Roxborough State Park southeast of Denver; and Sawhill and Walden Ponds in Boulder.

Again, remember the bug spray. If the fireflies are out so are their relatives.

See <<http://coloradocountybirding.org/>> and click on "Birding Locations" to find birding sites.

I thank Gary Lefco for information about the research center directions at the Pawnee Grasslands.

Thank you for your donation to the Research, Education and Conservation Fund:

Jacqueline Heyda, Mike Serruto

What Bird Is This?

Mary Cay Burger

Question: You are in a cottonwood-riparian habitat and you see 8- to 9-inch yellow bird chasing after Miller moths.

What was that?! It was sort of like a female oriole, but it had a black eye-line and throat.

Answer: Check the first-year male of the Bullock's Oriole in your field guides and adjacent photo!

Question: In eastern Colorado you may see both Bullock's and Baltimore Orioles and even some hybrids.

If you see a female oriole, how do you tell them apart? Baltimore Oriole females can be extremely variable especially during fall molt.

Answer: An unusually drab female Baltimore can be confused with a Bullock's female, which is gray-backed with a yellow upper breast and head.

The usual Baltimore female's breast is bright yellow-orange and she has dusky-brown auriculars and crown washed with orange-yellow.

When they fly, the female Baltimore has yellow-orange extending into the armpits (AKA axillaries).

The adult males are easier to identify since the Baltimore has a completely black head and less white in the wing.

Check your field guides and photos below and <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/384/articles/introduction>.



Page 1 photo: Bullock's Oriole female at Chimney Gulch, Golden, CO, spring. *Alistair Montgomery*



Baltimore Oriole female building nest, Quivera NWR, KS, May 2012. *Lee Farrell*



Baltimore Oriole male, S Padre Island, TX, May 2, 2004 fallout at ABA Convention. *Kay Niyo*



First-year male Bullock's Oriole at Red Rocks Park, June 11, 2011. *Kay Niyo*



Bullock's Oriole male, Red Rocks Park, June 11, 2011. *Kay Niyo*



Probable Baltimore Oriole female in hand, Ames, IA, September 1, 2012. *Stephen J. Dinsmore*

Denver Field Ornithologists

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December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members: Judi Acre, Arvada; Michael Fernandez, Denver; Tim Patnode, Denver; Patrick O'Driscoll, Denver; Chris Rurik, Denver; Mike Serruto, Denver; Michael and Tamara Dommermuth, Littleton

Upcoming Speakers

Bob Shade Aug. 25
"Birds of Japan"

Kim Potter and
Jason Beason Sept. 22
"Latest on Black Swift Research"

Bill Eden Oct. 27
"Birding in Borneo"

Chuck
Hundertmark Nov. 24
"Rockets and Ruins: Birding the
Yucatan in the Anthropocene"

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$	20
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$	35
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$	5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$	_____
Total	\$	_____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

A Darwinian Laboratory

DFO Awards 7 Grants

The Birds of June



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/JULY 2014/VOL 50 NO 7

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

Saturday, July 5

Golden Gate Canyon State Park, Jefferson County

Leader: Paula Hansley, 720-890-2628, cell 303-263-1714

**Trail: Easy hiking, 8000–9000 ft
RSVP required for leader to arrange carpools.**

Limit: 12 people

Meet at 8 a.m. at Visitor's Center in Golden Gate Canyon State Park, Jefferson and Gilpin counties for a trip lasting until after lunch.

Habitats will include montane, riparian, and pine forest. A wide variety of mountain birds will be seen (many at their nests).

Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Walking will be on easy trails, so light boots or sneakers will be fine.

Sunday, July 6

Central Plains Experimental Range (CPER) near Pawnee Grasslands

Leaders: Amber Carver and Mary Cay Burger

Trail: Moderate

RSVP required to Mary Burger, 303-771-3431, <mcburger3@juno.com>

Limit: 8 people

Meet at the CPER field houses at 9:15 a.m.

To get there from Denver, take I-25 north to Wellington (exit 278). After exiting, turn right and then take an immediate left onto the frontage road.

After half a mile, turn right on CR 64 (labeled as "Nunn Road").

After 11.1 miles, you will have

Continued on page 2

Beyond 'What bird is that?'

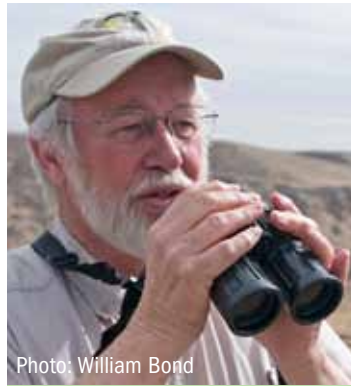


Photo: William Bond

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

This morning while Marjorie and I were sitting on our back deck, a couple of neighbors dropped by to chat. In the course of our conversation, they remembered a bird encounter they wanted to share.

Under the eaves of their home recently they had noticed a growing wasp nest. Beside it was an older small nest that appeared to have been torn up at the bottom. The nest was missing a big chunk.

As they were talking, a Blue Jay appeared in their yard. The jay flew up and reappeared in a tree with a large gray mass in its beak. Looking up to the wasp nest they found a chunk had been taken out of the bottom just like the chunk missing from the older nest. The jay was apparently raiding the wasp nests for the larva.

Much of the time when we're birding, our attention is focused on the question, "What bird is that?" This is especially true during migration when many

Continued on page 2



"What is this Yellow-headed Blackbird doing?" *Chuck Hundertmark*

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

reached the town of Nunn. Turn left on U.S. 85.

After 7.2 miles, turn right on CR 114. Take the first right (after 0.7 miles) down a dirt driveway toward a cluster of buildings.

Amber Carver will be waiting outside.

The hike will be easy but uneven, and only one or two miles total, with some driving from place to place.

Bring sturdy walking shoes to protect ankles (due to cactus). Spotting scopes optional (in case of raptors).

Expected species include McCown's Longspur, Lark Bunting, and Horned Lark.

Species that are possible (but not guaranteed) include Burrowing Owl, Mountain Plover, Ferruginous Hawk, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

NOTE: Amber Carver is an M.S. candidate at CU who was recently awarded a DFO grant for research to study the impact of grazing management on McCown's Longspur.

Saturday, July 12
Riverside Cemetery/Platte River, Denver County
Leader: Kevin Corwin,
<KevyGudGuy@aol.com> (pre-
ferred), home phone
720-482-8454

Trail: Easy

Limit: 12 people.

Preregister with leader.

Meet at Riverside Cemetery at 8 a.m. for trip ending at noon. Entrance is at 5201 Brighton Blvd in Denver.

The gates open at 8, so if they're closed when you arrive, park off to the side to allow the cemetery workers to get through, and ensure you're not

Continued on next page



Red-necked Grebe carrying nest material. *Chuck Hundertmark*

FROM THE PRESIDENT, continued from page 1

of us are looking for those elusive birds that visit us only briefly in spring or fall. Shorebirds, flycatchers, vireos, warblers, and sparrows keep us on our toes looking for eastern vagrants to add to our year lists.

Sometimes, though, the most interesting question is, "What is that bird doing?" Whether it's a Blue Jay boldly raiding a wasp's nest for food, or a Red-necked Grebe in North Park carrying a big gob of wet vegetation, bird behavior can be both interesting and entertaining.

The summer months between migration periods can be a particularly rewarding time for watching behavior. The birds we encounter then are often old friends. Observing them as they compete for territory, form pair bonds, and raise a new generation of birds can provide us opportunities to get to know them better.

Early in the season, song can provide good opportunities for observation. On a recent trip to North Park, I spent some time listening to Marsh Wrens. The buzzes and chatter of these wrens are readily recognizable as they emanate from a swath of cattails.

When you listen closely, however, you realize that the wren seldom repeats the same song. Each short burst of song is different, even though the overall quality of the song is recognizable. In *The Singing Life of Birds*, Donald Kroodsma tells us each wren has a playbook of more than 100 songs.

If more than one wren is singing, you may hear one of the birds repeat the song just issued by the other. Biologists call it song matching. It may be a way for the birds to recognize who is a neighbor.

Whether you catch a bird capitalizing on an unexpected food source, carrying nest material where it isn't supposed to be breeding, or displaying musical virtuosity, asking "What is that bird doing?" can make summer birding more exciting.

What Bird Is This?

Mary Cay Burger

Question: So you are driving through Rocky Mountain National Park and you pull over at the Lava Cliffs and you see small brown birds about sparrow-size.

But then the sunlight hits one just right and the wing and lower breast shine pink! Some of them have a dark crown.

What are they and what are they doing?

Answer: Think back to Red Rocks

Trading Post last winter and remember a drabber version of these guys.

The three species from last winter have all gone back to their three different breeding areas, and here we have Brown-capped Rosy-Finches that breed at high attitude in Colorado and feed on insects on the snow fields.

Another location you might see Brown-capped Rosy-Finches is while walking around Summit Lake on the way to Mt. Evans.



Brown-capped Rosy-Finch, Conifer Mt., January 6, 2008. Kay Niyo

**Thank you for your donation to the Research,
Education and Conservation Fund:**

Diana Tomback; Tuesday Birders

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

parked on the mainline railroad tracks that cross the entry drive.

We will park next to the main office building, which is on your right as you enter the property.

This will be an easy hike on flat terrain, though we may walk cross-country down to the wetlands along the Platte and among groves of trees on the north edge of the cemetery.

The lanes in the cemetery are dirt, so they could be muddy if there's been a recent rain.

We'll cover 1-3 miles, depending on the birds, weather. Bring water, sunscreen, bug spray, headgear, and optics.

Restrooms available.

Sunday, July 13

Cherry Creek Wetlands Loop

**Leader: Karen von Saltza,
cell 303-941-4881**

No RSVP required

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek State Park.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Road to the Prairie Loop located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Half day of walking though most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery and muddy, so dress accordingly.

Bring water and snack; lunch optional. Beginning birders welcome.

Note: This is a regularly conducted trip the 2nd Sunday of each month, cosponsored with Audubon.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Saturday, July 19

**Rocky Mountain National
Park, Larimer County**

**Trail: Moderate with relatively
flat trails**

**Leader: Ed Holub, phone
303-979-2194**

Call if you plan to go.

Meet at the Beaver Meadows
Visitor Center at 8:15 a.m. just
west of Estes Park. Pay entrance
fee or carpool and share the fee.

Full day trip starting at 8:15
a.m. and ending at 3 to 4 p.m.,
so bring lunch and water.

Dress for changeable weather
(hat, sunscreen, raincoat).

Sunday, July 20

Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge

**Leader: Toni Rautus,
303-422-7322**

Trail: Easy, < 3 miles

**Call leader by July 18 and leave
your name and phone number.**

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Prospect
Park in Wheat Ridge for a 1/2
day trip.

From I-70 exit 267, take
Kipling south about 3/4 of a
mile and turn right (west) on
44th Avenue.

Go one mile west. Look for the
entrance to Prospect Park on
your left (south).

Meet just inside the park in the
lot right next to Prospect Lake.

We'll check the lake for
waterfowl before birding the
paved and dirt paths along Clear
Creek.

Bring water and snacks; dress
for the weather.

Continued on next page

Colorado Birds of the Month: July

Ira Sanders

In July, the average high in Denver
is 88 degrees and the average low
is 64 degrees, up 7 and 12 degrees
on the high and low from June,
although it has reached 104 just as in
June, and has fallen to 43.

The state record high of 114
degrees occurred in July 1933 in Las
Animas and in 1954 in Sedgwick.

Major rainstorms in July can be
deadly.

Probably the most devastating
storm in modern Colorado history
occurred on July 31, 1976, when
a stationary storm over Estes Park
dropped 12 inches of rain causing
the Big Thompson River to rise
10 feet and flood in only minutes,
resulting in 139 deaths.

The Big Thompson canyon was
devastated.

On July 28, 1997, a stalled thun-
derstorm inundated Ft. Collins with
13 inches of rain. The ensuing flood

washed away a trailer park and killed
five. Six inches of snow fell on Mt.
Evans on July 4, 1995.

July is an interesting and danger-
ous month for weather. And then
there is the hail.

Speaking of Mt. Evans, July is a
good time to look for Brown-capped
Rosy-Finches and American Pipits
that nest on the tundra there.

Also while on the tundra, either
there, on Guanella or Loveland Pass,
or above the Visitors Center on Trail
Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain Na-
tional Park, watch for White-tailed
Ptarmigan in their mottled plumage
leading chicks through the tundra
grasses and flowers.

At Castlewood Canyon State Park
near Franktown, southeast of Den-
ver, watch and listen for Ovenbird,
which can be found nesting at this
location and other higher elevation

Continued on page 4



Solitary Sandpiper, May 5, 2014. *Ira Sanders*

COLORADO BIRDS OF THE MONTH, continued from page 4

areas in Colorado in ponderosa pine forest.

Just south of Castlewood, watch and listen for Dickcissel and Bobolink on Castlewood Canyon Rd two miles east of Lake Gulch Rd. This is right before the entrance gate to Winkler Ranch, on the south side of the road in the alfalfa fields.

Bobolink can also be found around Boulder County. And this year, it is being reported from Larimer County at Reservoir Ridge Natural Area Trailhead, which is in the far northwest part of Fort Collins, west of Overland Trail about a mile south of Michaud Lane.

Check for Dickcissel on the wires and shrubs near alfalfa fields while you listen for *dick dick ciss ciss ciss*.

Shorebirds will start returning from the Arctic in late July. Watch any mudflats you can find for these long distance migrants.

If water levels are low, Bebee Draw, the mudflats south of Lower Latham Reservoir discussed in earlier columns, and Barr Lake are good places for shorebirds, though

this year, the water level at Barr Lake is very high.

Loloff Reservoir, east of Latham at the intersection of WCR 50 and 57, can also be good. You can park by the gate.

Hummingbirds were overwhelmingly the bird mentioned most by my contributors for you to watch for, especially along the Front Range.

You should put out your hummingbird feeders by July 4 to catch Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds on their southward migration. Rufous will start showing up first and Calliope will follow.

If you see a hummer in the plains away from the foothills and mountains, check to see if it is a Black-chinned Hummingbird, which has been expanding its nesting range along the Front Range foothills.

Hummers of all four species, including the not yet mentioned summer resident broad-tailed, can be found far from the foothills in late summer and fall migration. I've seen

Continued on page 6



American Avocet at Belmar Park, May 19, 2014. *Ira Sanders*

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Saturday, July 26
Cherry Creek State Park,
Arapahoe County
Leader: Buzz Schaumberg,
303-699-1721
or cell 303-478-4641
Trail: < 2 mile of easy
walking, driving between
stopping locations
RSVP required, but no
participant limit
Please leave your number
for a return call if we have to
adjust the plan.

Meet at 7 a.m. at the marina parking lot on the west side of the park for a half-day trip.

Look for gulls, waterfowl, midsummer birds, and possible fledglings in mixed habitats: water, riparian, and prairie.

We will carpool as much as we can. Bring scopes if you have them, binocs, water, snacks, and dress for weather. Lunch optional.

State Parks pass and water fee required. Good trip for beginner and novice birders.

Sunday, July 27
South Table Mountain, Golden
Leader: Mike Foster,
303-456-2647
Trail: Moderate, ~3-mile hike,
elevation gain of 500 feet
Limit: 8 people. Preregister
with Mike.

Meet at 6 a.m. at the SE corner of RTD lot (2nd and Routt) a few blocks east of Union Blvd.

From 6th Ave and Union, drive south to 2nd, then turn left and enter lot off of Routt. Will carpool to trailhead from here. Half-day trip.

This site combines grassland and foothills habitats, attracting a surprising diversity of birds.

—Scheduled by
Candice Johnson

them at Lake Jackson in Morgan County during migration.

Mid-July is the time that the hummer numbers will increase. Adults will appear first followed by the immatures.

Many restaurants and hotels in the mountains maintain feeders, so check them when you have the chance. Also watch for any big hummers as postbreeding wandering occurs, and a big one, a Magnificent or Blue-throated, could pop up anywhere.

Three-toed Woodpecker may be the easiest to find in July when they are most active feeding their young.

This bird is more commonly associated with spruce and lodgepole pine, particularly if the trees are diseased.

Lodgepole pines that have been killed or weakened from the pine beetle can be a good indicator of this bird.

Rocky Mountain National Park is a good viewing location for the three-toed, particularly Wild Basin. The campground at the base of Mt. Evans is one location where I have seen them and White Ranch Open Space in Jefferson County is another place to look.

There is an area about 9.8 miles southwest of Sedalia in Jefferson County on CO 67 that has been good for the three-toed in the past.

Go west out of Sedalia and when you get to Rampart Range Road, come back 0.2 miles and check the area just north of the road. I have usually parked by the split rail fence there.

Also look in conifer forests that have been affected by forest fires and



Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Golden. *Ira Sanders*

with all the recent fires in Colorado, there are many areas to check.

Black Swifts can be easier to see in July when they also are feeding their young.

Hanging Lake in Glenwood Canyon, Rifle Falls (Delorme 34 C4), and Box Canyon in the town of Ouray, are good places to observe these birds.

This is the last month for this column as we have completed another 12-month cycle and I thank you for your interest and the nice comments about the columns.

I thank Bill Schmoker, Karl Stecher, Nathan Pieplow, Bill Kaempfer, Glenn Walbek, Dave Stringer, Dave Leatherman, and Tina Jones for contributing to this month's column.



Calliope Hummingbird, Golden. *Ira Sanders*

See <http://coloradocountybirding.org/> and click on "Birding Locations" to find birding sites.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April		
May	Jackie King	720-381-3314
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
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October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Jackie King	720-381-3314
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members:

Roberta Chase, Englewood; Peggy Salzer, Lakewood; Diana Tomback, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Bob Shade

Aug. 25

"Birds of Japan"

Kim Potter and Jason Beason

Sept. 22

"Latest on Black Swift Research"

Bill Eden

Oct. 27

"Birding in Borneo"

Chuck Hundertmark

Nov. 24

"Rockets and Ruins: Birding the Yucatan in the Anthropocene"

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

\$ 20

☐ Annual family membership (mailed *The Lark Bunting*)

\$ 35

☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)

\$ 5

☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation

\$ _____

Total

\$ _____

Name(s)

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone (optional)

Email (legible)

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl, Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

July Field Trips

What Bird Is This?

Final Birds of the Month



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/AUGUST 2014/VOL 50 NO 8

WWW.DFOBIRDERS.ORG

Field Trips

Saturday, August 2

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt

Leaders: Mary Geder, 303-986-6127 and Jackie King, 720-381-3314

Call leader if going

Meet at Prospect Park at 8 a.m.

From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 0.75 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Ave.

Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This will be a half-day trip, easy walking, accessible for mobility impaired individuals. Bring water and a snack, lunch optional.

Good trip for novice birders and new members.

Sunday, August 3

Jackson Lake Reservoir

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders, 303-278-7172

Call leaders if going

Meet at 6 a.m. at the Division of Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right to carpool.

State Parks Pass required.

This is an all day trip so bring lunch, plenty of water, bug spray, and sunscreen. Scopes will be helpful and remember your mud boots as we may hike through some mud.

Continued on page 2

CFO Convention registration due July 15

The CFO 2014 convention will be held during fall migration in Colorado's Northeast Plains from Thursday–Sunday, August 28–31, 2014. Headquarters will be at the Sterling Ramada Inn.

Fall migration in northeastern Colorado is especially exciting. Shorebirds will be at maximum diversity, with a great mix of juvenile and adult plumages. Migrants, including sought-after eastern vagrants, will be around. Jon Dunn will be the keynote speaker.

Check <<http://cfobirds.org/convention/2014/index.htm>> for more information and to register online. The deadline for early registration is July 15.



White-tailed
Ptarmigan

High-altitude excursion: DFO field trip to Rocky Mountain National Park

June 22, 2014



American Pipit



Lincoln's
Sparrow

Photos by John Breitsch

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Saturday, August 9

Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader: Ed Holub, 303-979-2194

Call leader if going

Meet at 8 a.m. at the RMNP Visitor Center parking lot east of the Beaver Meadows entrance station on U.S. 36.

Full-day trip, bring lunch and water. National Parks pass required.

Sunday, August 10

Banner Lakes State Wildlife Area

Leader: Mark Amershek,
<mamershek@msn.com>,

303-329-8646

RSVP Mark before August 1

Limit: 10 people

Meet leader and Bruce Neuman at 7:30 a.m. at the wildlife area for a half-day trip.

Take I-76 north, to the Hudson exit (exit 31), go four miles east on CO 52. The main parking lot is on the left (north) just past CR 53 (Delorme 31 D6).

We will bird both the north and south sides of the area. There are numerous small- to medium-sized ponds, many ringed with marshes, Russian olives, and junipers.

Moderate on- and off-trail hiking of about 4 miles total.

Bring water, hat, sunscreen, and insect repellent. Scopes helpful but not necessary.

Potential for a hawk/owl search of the DIA loop in the afternoon.

Sunday, August 10

Cherry Creek Wetlands Loop

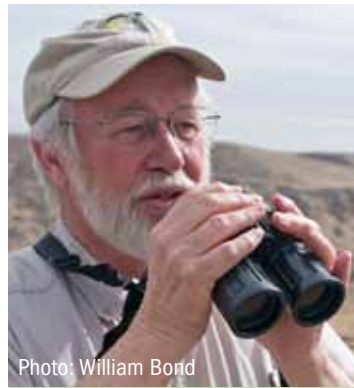
Leader: Karen von Saltza,
303-368-9961

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd. to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south

Continued on next page

eBird offers two ways to share reports



From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

There are two ways that eBird reports can be shared, and the difference between the methods is important. Whether you are leading a DFO field trip or just birding with friends, you will probably find occasions to use both methods.

Sharing with others you birded with

When you have submitted a report to eBird, on the right side of the page, you see a link that reads, "Share w/Others in Your Party."

Clicking on that link opens two text boxes, one for addresses and one for a message. The wording in the link says it all. This method of sharing is meant to be used *only* for people who were birding with you when you made the observations in the list.

In the "To" box, you can enter either the eBird username or email address of each person who was on your trip. eBird recommends entering the username to avoid the list being accepted into the wrong account. (See <<http://help.ebird.org/customer/portal/articles/1010555-understanding-the-ebird-checklist-sharing-process>> for a full explanation.)

People you share this list with will receive an email that contains a link to the list. They have the option of accepting or declining the list. If they accept the list, all of the species on the list become part of their personal list.

Managing shared lists

When entering a list for a group, the eBird staff suggests entering all birds seen and counted by anyone in the group. **This is particularly important for DFO field trip leaders.** Individuals in the group can then edit the list to reflect their own observations.

If you are the recipient of a shared list, you can edit the list once you have accepted it. You can delete species seen by others, but not by you. You can add a species you saw that is not on the share list.

And, you can add comments. Perhaps you saw an American Robin feeding young and the others missed it. You can add a note about the adult robin feeding young.

Sharing with people not on the trip

You may also want to share your list with people who were not on the trip. To do that you should copy the address for your trip report and paste it into an email. This avoids having the list accepted into the recipient's email account. You would use this method if you wanted to share your list with COBirds.

Here's a link to a recent report I submitted for ColonyWatch visit to Walden Reservoir: <<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S18951750>>. If

Continued on page 3

Obtain a Federal Duck Stamp from ABA

The 2014–2015 Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, commonly known as the Federal Duck Stamp, is now available from June 27, 2014 through January 31, 2015.

It is sold at many U.S. Post Offices. However, this year ABA is offering a chance to conveniently order it through their website at <http://aba.org/> for the usual cost of \$15.

The Federal Duck Stamp was originally created in 1934 as federal licenses required for hunting migratory waterfowl, but they have a much larger purpose today.

They are vital tools for wetland conservation, as 98 cents out of every dollar generated by the sale of the stamps goes directly to purchase or lease wetland habitat for protection in the National Wildlife Refuge System. It has been one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated.

Since 1934, sales of Federal Duck Stamps have generated more than \$800 million, which has been used to purchase or lease over 6 million acres of wetlands habitat in the United States frequented by most birders. These lands are protected in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System.

A current Federal Duck Stamp also serves as an entrance pass for national wildlife refuges where admission is charged.

RMBO Colorado Field Trip

RMBO is sponsoring a trip from September 5–7, 2014. It begins and ends at Barr Lake, Brighton, CO and travels to the Alfred M. Bailey Bird Nesting Area, Arapaho NF, Grand Mesa, Box Canyon near Ouray for Black Swifts, and back through southern Colorado.

Cost of \$750 includes transportation, lodging, and most meals with proceeds benefiting Black Swift research and conservation. Enjoy bird banding, historical and scientific presentations, and time in the field birding with local biologists and trip leaders as we traverse the beautiful state of Colorado. RSVP by August 5: Jason Beason, 970-310-5117 or jason.beason@rmbo.org.

FROM THE PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

you click the link or paste it into your browser, you'll see the list, but it won't become part of your eBird account.

I use this link to share the list with the ColonyWatch coordinator, Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife biologists. On the other hand, I use "Share w/Others in Your Party" to share the list with other volunteers who counted with me.

**Thank you for your donation to the DFO Research,
Education and Conservation Fund:
Karen von Saltza; Peggy Gonder**

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. No registration required.

NOTE: This is a regularly conducted field trip the 2nd Sunday of each month, cosponsored with Denver Audubon.

**Saturday, August 16
Barr Lake State Park
Leader: Buzz Schaumberg,
303-478-4641**

Please call leader if going
Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass required.

Bring lunch, plenty of water, and bug spray as trip may be $\frac{3}{4}$ day depending on birds and weather. Trip can be easily modified to be accessible for a person with a disability.

Beginners are welcome.

**Sunday, August 17
Roxborough State Park
Trail: Easy/Moderate
Leader: Doris Cruze,
303-798-8072**

Meet outside the Roxborough SP Visitor Center at 7:30 a.m.

Will hike for 2 to 2.5 hours. State Parks pass or \$7 day pass required.

Bring binoculars, water, sturdy footwear, and snacks. Lunch optional, but there is a great place to picnic at the park.

Participants will probably see Lesser Goldfinch and Golden Eagle.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Saturday, August 23 Chatfield State Park

**Leader: Bob Shade,
303-975-2476**

Call leader if going

Meet inside west entrance of park off S. Wadsworth, 1½ miles south of C-470.

State Parks Pass required. This will be a half-day trip so lunch will be optional but bring water and a snack.

Sunday, August 24

Walden Ponds, Boulder County

**Leader: Chuck Hundertmark,
<chundertmark8@gmail.com>,
303-604-0531**

Limit: 11

Call or email if going

Meet leader at Cottonwood Marsh parking lot at 8 a.m.

Half-day trip. Easy walking 2 to 3 miles. If time allows, we'll also check Teller Lake #5 and the White Rocks Trail.

Sunday, August 31

Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748

Meet leader at 5:30 a.m. at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right to carpool.

State Parks pass and Jumbo Res/Prewitt Res access permit required.

This is an all-day trip so bring lunch, plenty of water, and bug spray.

—Scheduled by Jackie King

The 'Jane' Quiz: Which Empid is which?

by Bob Righter

Although "Jane" has been a DFO member for a while, she exists only in spirit and her leadership skills are legendary.

Jane's Crow Valley bird trip was scheduled for Labor Day, a key time of year in the birding calendar for fall migrants. Everyone who signed up for the trip is eager to see a lot of rare migrants and secretly hoping this will be the trip where oodles of rare "eastern" warblers will be seen.

After arrival and proper introductions, the group took off in a clockwise route shuffling and pishing along the south fence. Susie thought she heard a House Wren, many others saw a robin, and a distant Turkey Vulture was detected by a few.

Jane's persistent and expert pishing and screech-owl calling produced a scared-to-death Brown Thrasher, but aside from that no "nifties" had been seen.

Temperatures were getting hot, there was neither breeze nor any migrants, and the group's enthusiasm was waning to the degree where Jane began to hear murmuring of, "Why are there so few migrants? I thought this was the hot place to be."

Jane skillfully pointed out that just because Crow Valley is one of the premier birding migrant traps in the country, it doesn't mean that every trip will produce a bevy of rare birds.

After a few more hours of birding and listening to Jane's pishing, the list was barely at twenty-five species and everyone was thinking about lunch.

After settling down in the enclosed group picnic area, everyone with great

enthusiasm ripped into their picnic boxes, sandwiches were spread on wax paper, and everyone heartily dug in.

Betty looked up at the tall popular trees above the picnic table and stated, "There is a small gray bird flitting around the canopy."

By this time of day it was a monumental struggle to search for a small gray job high in a green tree instead of eating cookies that were now being passed around, but a few of us did.

There wasn't just one small gray bird, but

Continued on page 5



"Presumed Hammond's Flycatcher due to short tail and long wing projections. What do you think, Jane?" Jane will respond with her answer in the next issue of *The Lark Bunting*! Chatfield State Park, September 2010. Lee Farrell

THE 'JANE' QUIZ, continued from page 4

quite a large flock of grayish birds flitting around, wing and tail flicking. Jack thought they were a large flock of Bushtits.

Jane knew exactly what was happening and she knew there was going to be bedlam among birders and was already wondering how she was going to finesse this complicated situation.

Jane calmly stated, "They are all *Empidonax* flycatchers!" In fact, it was the largest mixed *Empidonax* species flock Jane had ever seen in Colorado, matched only by a similar episode she once experienced during spring migration in southeast Arizona.

Within thirty seconds everyone in the group barked out the names of all five possible western Empids that could occur and then began rigorously defending their calls based solely on features shown in field guides.

Jane knew she had to quickly focus the group's attention on what was pertinent. Speaking calmly, which instantly relaxed the group, she said, "The field marks separating Empids are so subtle and subjective that it is difficult to evaluate what is a valid field mark and what isn't. Compounding the dilemma, there is often more variation *within* an Empid species than there is *between* Empid species."

Jane further pointed out that during fall migration most Empids are molting and are in their drabest, most worn, cryptic plumage. This sparked Susie's attention and she said, "Jane, how then can we tell one species from another?" Jane responded in a confident manner, "In fall we usually identify Empids by degrees."

As luck would have it, one drab, worn, grayish Empid landed on an overhanging bare branch close by. Jane began pointing out to the group the important features she was noticing: "See how drab and gray this Empid appears? Notice the underparts are whitish. Notice there is no visible eye-ring and the bill seems average length and the tail is thinnish and long. This Empid is either a Dusky or a Gray Flycatcher."

Bob R in an annoyingly challenging tone quizzed Jane by saying, "Why isn't this bird a Hammond's or a Willow Flycatcher?"

Jane was ready, "Good question, Bob R. The Hammond's Flycatcher is the only western Empid that molts before migrating south. Therefore, its plumage is brand new and comparatively sharp appearing, with prominent wing bars, a degree of yellow on its belly, and a slight contrast between the grayish head with the clean, neat, olive upperparts."

Continued on page 6



"Maybe Willow Flycatcher? Is this right, Jane?" Jane said she will respond in the next issue of *The Lark Bunting*. Last Chance, CO, September 2013. Lee Farrell



"A Cordilleran Flycatcher in summer plumage, Jane?" Evergreen, CO, July 13, 2007. Kay Niyo

"The Willow Flycatcher would also appear grayish and drab at this time of year. But the Willow Flycatcher's western subspecies, the races we would expect to see, could also show a brownish tinge to the upperparts.

"If the longer, wider tail is clearly seen, it would further be suggestive of a Willow. Also the Willow's bill averages longer and wider than most other western Empids, and the white on the throat tends to intrude into the lower portion of the neck."

Jane also acknowledged if a Willow Flycatcher is not seen well it could rightfully join the Dusky/Gray/Willow conundrum.

Jane noticed another close bird perched on a horizontal limb and said, "Hey guys, get on this Empid."

Jane pointed out how this Empid was undergoing a molt by its scruffy wings and weak, messy-appearing wing bars.

This Empid showed a weak eye-ring, not like the classic Cordilleran Flycatcher in fresh plumage would show with a large tear drop behind the eye-ring. There was no yellow on the throat nor on the breast, both areas were just dark gray.

Edith just couldn't control herself any longer and sang out, "So, what is this bird, Jane?"

Jane's intuition was that this Empid was a Cordilleran Flycatcher but couldn't say for certain and wisely reduced her degree of certainty to a probable Cordilleran.

Harriet inquiringly asked Jane "I thought you could separate some Empids by sound."

"Right you are," replied Jane and she further verified that hearing calls or songs of an Empid is the



"What plumage is this Gray Flycatcher photographed in March in CA, Jane?"
Browley, CA, March 8, 2008. Kay Niyo

best way to tell which Empid is which.

Jane also asked everyone, "Has anyone heard any sounds today?" Everybody shook their heads sideways registering a no, that they hadn't heard any sound.

Jane further informed the group that migrating Empids are not as vocal as they are on the breeding ground and this afternoon encounter with little gray jobs proved Jane's point.

It was now about 2 p.m. and everyone's brain was squashed from overstimulation, but all felt Jane's instruction was very enlightening.

Most felt they didn't have to make an attempt to identify every Empid they saw, and calling out "Dusky/Gray/Willow" was perfectly acceptable and in fact a more correct method of labeling Empids in the fall.

Jane looked over at Bob R and noticed he appeared disappointed, and said, "What's wrong, Bob R?"

He replied he wished he had seen a Blackburnian Warbler today.

"Good grief," Jane wisely said to herself but just managed to say out loud, "I'm sorry, Bob R."

Everyone shouted, "Thank you, Jane, for a great day. We will be on your next trip!"

As Jane was leaving she said, "If you want to read more about Empid identification, try Kenn Kaufman's *Advanced Birding*.

"And if you get any good photos of an Empid, let me know what you think they are and why, and I will try to identify them for you the next time we meet!"

Watch for Jane's answers in the next issue of *The Lark Bunting!*

Denver Field Ornithologists

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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS 2014

January	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
February	Jackie King	720-381-3314
March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April		
May	Jackie King	720-381-3314
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
August	Jackie King	720-381-3314
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Jackie King	720-381-3314
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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COBirds	
Internet bird-sighting discussion list	www.cfobirds.org

Colorado Rare Bird Alert	
Joyce Takamine, Alison Hlif, Dick Schottler	303-659-8750

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check www.dfobirders.org, Colorado Rare Bird Alert (303-659-8750), or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members:

Roberta Chase, Englewood; Sharon Kermiet, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Bob Shade

Aug. 25

“Birds of Japan”

Glenn Walbek

Sept. 22

Title TBD

Bill Eden

Oct. 27

“Birding in Borneo”

Chuck Hundertmark

Nov. 24

“Rackets and Ruins: Birding the Yucatan in the Anthropocene”

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

\$ 20

☐ Annual family membership (mailed *The Lark Bunting*)

\$ 35

☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)

\$ 5

☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation

\$ _____

Total

\$ _____

Name(s)

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone (optional)

Email (legible)

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl, Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists

10826 E. Maplewood Place

Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

August Field Trips

The 'Jane' Quiz



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/SEPTEMBER 2014/VOL 50 NO 9

HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG

Field Trips

Chatfield State Park Saturday, September 6 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Paul Slingsby (Email: paslingsby@comcast.net
Phone: 303-422-3728)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 12
If not registering online, please contact leader to register.

Directions: Meet for car-pooling at the intersection of S Wadsworth and Deer Creek Rd. Park on the north side of Deer Creek Rd which is just south of C-470.

Easy walking on dirt paths. State Parks pass required. We will hike from Kingfisher Bridge and visit other areas of interest.

Bluff Lake Nature Center Sunday, September 7 7:30 AM - 11:00 AM

A.J. Gest (Email: offsetaj@comcast.net
Phone: 303-994-2420)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 12
If not registering online, please contact leader to register.

Directions: From I-70 East, go south on Havana Street and left onto E 29th Dr, which then joins Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.

Continue on Martin Luther King Jr Blvd to Bluff Lake Nature Center in the park on left side.

Easy walk of 1.5 miles on fairly level paths through the cattails and cottonwoods.

We could spot some interesting waterfowl, early fall migrants, and the resident raptors.

Bring water, binocs, and dress

Continued on page 2

Birds of Japan—Zehi, oide kudasai!



Bob Shade, Micki Shade

DFO Vice President Bob Shade will be the featured speaker at the Monday, August 25 meeting of DFO.

Zehi, oide kudasai! “By all means, please come!”

When Bob Shade landed in Japan in 1969, he and his wife Kay had two years to study the language in the mountain resort of Karuizawa, at the time one of the best birding locations in all Japan.

But there was no field guide in English, so Bob laboriously memorized

Continued on page 3

‘Engaging’ new DFO website goes live

In mid-August, a new interactive DFO website went live. Thanks to the determined and skillful work of a handful of people, DFO members will see an exciting new look and find a treasury of new tools for birding and engaging with DFO.

The best way to learn what’s new on the site is to go there at either <<http://dfobirds.org>> or <<http://dfobirders.org>>.

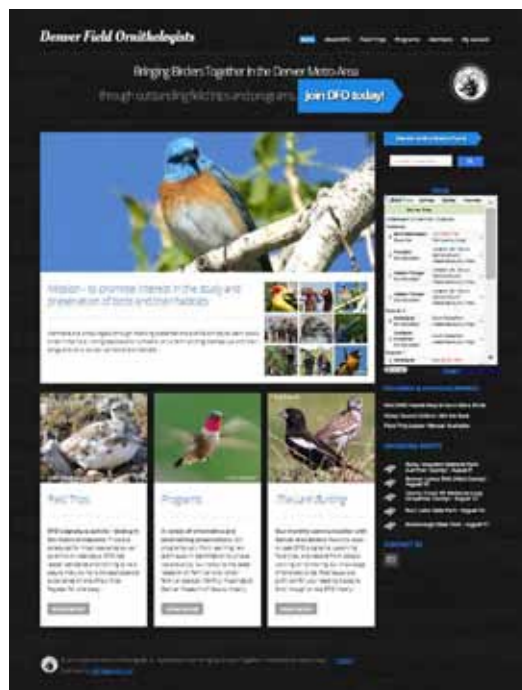
You’ll have access to the most current newsletter as well as archives of past issues of *The Lark Bunting*.

You will find lists of upcoming programs and upcoming field trips.

Even more importantly, the site has become an interactive application for DFO where you can update your contact information, pay your annual dues, and register for field trips.

To get the full benefit of the new site, you’ll want to

Continued on page 2



Field Trips

Continued from page 1

for the weather; scopes are optional. There are portable toilets on site.

September 13–14

Audubon Fall Bird Counts

Refer to the schedule on page 4 in this newsletter.

Fowler and North Spring Brook Trails (Boulder County)

Saturday, September 20

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Paula Hansley (Email: plhansley@gmail.com

Phone: 720-890-2628)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

If not registering online, please contact leader to register.

Directions: Meet at the NE corner of the intersection of Highways 93 and 170. Carpool 3 miles west to the trailhead where parking is limited.

Easy trip on the Fowler and North Spring Brook trails (southern Boulder County). Bring binoculars, snack, and water.

We will pass a burn area where Lewis's Woodpeckers nested this year and walk by the area in which Grace's Warbler was seen.

We will look for migrants along these trails, which go through a variety of habitats.

Barr Lake State Park

Sunday, September 21

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Bill Wuerthele (Email: wuerthel@ecentral.com

Phone: 303-333-2519)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 14

If not registering online, please contact leader to register.

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Continued on next page

WEBSITE: FROM THE PRESIDENT, continued from page 1

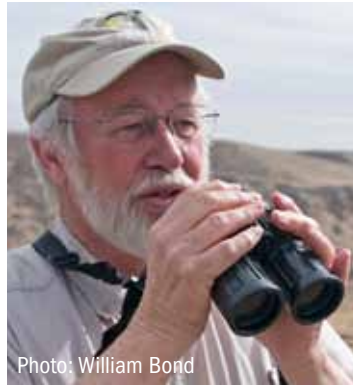


Photo: William Bond

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

create your individual account. All current DFO members have been entered into the new system.

Assuming we had your current email address on file, creating your individual account should be simple.

Go to the top menu item "Create Account," enter your email address, and follow the instructions.

Once you have created your account you should have access to content available only to DFO members such as our member directory and meeting minutes. Security has been applied so that only members in

good standing will have access.

One of the more exciting features of our new site is the ability to sign our field trip waiver and register for field trips online. This feature of the site will simplify the field trip process for both leaders and participants.

Once you have your account set up, go to Field Trips, Upcoming Trips/ Register. Select a trip that may be of interest to you.

If you have not yet logged in, do so now. Enter a name and phone number for an emergency contact and check the box agreeing to the waiver if you have not done so previously. Click on the button to register.

You are now ready to go birding with no more paperwork to complete the morning of the trip!

Our hope as we move forward and members adjust to a newer but simpler way of doing business is that this process will eliminate some of the delay at the beginning of a field trip.

You will also find other conveniences such as keeping your mailing and email addresses current as well as a simple online membership renewal. Use your credit card if you like through our PayPal account.

For those who are anxious to try out the new site, consider making a donation to the Research, Education, and Conservation Fund.

DFO Secretary Kay Niyo served as the lead liaison with site developer Ann Johnson. Kay and Ann put in prodigious hours this summer.

Richard Holmes Anderson facilitated access to content from the previous website. Treasurer Mary Geder worked to get the financial structure in place. Mary Cay Burger worked to get the membership database right. Karen Von Saltza worked with Ann and Kay to set up the field trip functions. Many others also helped along the way.

In the months ahead, there may be a few bugs to work out as trip schedulers and leaders become comfortable working with the site capabilities, and the site is fully tested by all of you. In the long run, the website should serve members, trip leaders, schedulers, board members, and the public well.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM, *continued from page 1*

all the bird names in a rather crudely drawn Japanese bird book. To this day, the names and voices are more familiar to him in Japanese than in English.

He has been watching birds since age 6 and photographing them since age 15. That was in the days of Kodachrome film (!) with an ASA of 8 (not a typo) and blue flash bulbs that of course had to be changed after every shot, few telephoto lenses, no zoom lenses, no image stabilization, and no automatic exposure or automatic focus.

Most of these photos are from the 1980s and 1990s and Bob issues a disclaimer that, though they are acceptable, are not quite up to recent quality standards.

Japan has a fascinating array of avian fauna for a small country. Over 500 species have been recorded there. Bob finally managed to see just over 300 of them.

Two hundred years ago Japan was a waterfowl paradise with herons and storks, sadly now extinct in Japan, foraging in the rice paddies alongside peasants planting rice seedlings by hand.

By going to special wintering grounds, one can easily see three species of cranes, often with a few rarities like the severely endangered Siberian White Crane.

About half of the ducks, gulls, plovers, and sandpiper species familiar to North American birders are also found in Japan with Asian species like Falcated Duck and Black-tailed Gull as new birds. Sighting the super-rare Spoon-billed Sandpiper was a special treat.

The forest and field birds are almost entirely different, many of them such as the Skylark, Common Cuckoo, and Common Kingfisher are found from England to Japan.

Others of course are unique to East Asia (e.g., Varied Tit) and a few endemic to Japan, like the Japanese Green Woodpecker.

Japan stretches from the snows and Steller's Sea Eagles of Hokkaido in the north to the hot jungles and rare Okinawa Rail of subtropical Okinawa in the south.



Daurian Redstart, female. *Bob Shade*

Many of the birds are often heard but seldom seen, like the four species of cuckoos and the much-loved Uguisu (Japanese Bush Warbler).

The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium.

Enter through the west door by 7:30 p.m. We must lock the door a little after that time.

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

Bring binocs (scope if you have one), water, snack (lunch optional), bug spray, and sunscreen.

We will walk between 3 and 4 miles on an easy trail along the lake.

Rocky Mountain National Park (Larimer County)

Thursday, September 25

8:15 AM - 3:00 PM

Christie Owens (Email: christiel@q.com)

Phone: 303-772-6048)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

If not registering online, please contact leader by September 23 to register.

Directions: Meet at the RMNP Visitor Center parking lot east of the RMNP Beaver Meadows entrance station on U.S. 36.

Relatively flat trails and walking up to three miles at altitude.

Bring binoculars, lunch, and water. Dress for changeable weather (hat, sunscreen, raincoat) and wear sturdy walking shoes.

Habitats will include montane, riparian, and pine forest.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Parker Jordan Centennial Open Space

Saturday, September 27

8:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Cynthia Madsen & David Hill
(Email: cmadsen08@gmail.com
Phone: 303-770-6534)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 20

If not registering online, please
contact leader to register.

Directions: (1) Go south on
Parker Rd/CO 83 to E Broncos
Pkwy, but DO NOT turn at the
light.

Continue about 100 yds south
of the light at E Broncos Pkwy
and turn right onto a dirt road
(mile marker 64).

Continue west into the Tagawa
Garden Center parking lot. Fol-
low the parking lot to the west
exit.

Before you reach E Broncos
Pkwy, take a short road to your
left to parking lot where we will
meet.

OR (2) From I-25, take Exit
197 east onto S Arapahoe Rd for
~3.5 miles to S Jordan Rd and
then south to E Broncos Pkwy.

Follow E Broncos Pkwy east for
~0.5 miles.

Just after crossing over Cherry
Creek and Trail, there is a short
road on the right just before you
reach Tagawa Garden Center.

Turn right onto that road and
turn right into the parking lot.

This will be an easy walk of 2.6
miles over flat terrain enjoying
the birds of riparian habitat
along Cherry Creek.

Bring binoculars, water,
snacks.

—Scheduled by Mary Geder

2014 Audubon Fall Bird Counts

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver has conducted Fall Bird Counts for over 30 years. There are no fees, but some sites require a state parks pass or pre-registration. Bring binoculars, scopes for the reservoir counts, field guide, and lunch. Everyone is welcome to help—more eyes see more birds

Saturday, September 13

Waterton Downstream

Leader: Darrin Seex, 408-458-0370, <mrseex@gmail.com>

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Audubon Nature Center (left turn immediately after turning onto Waterton/Roxborough road and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon). It is a 4- to 5-mile hike. Wear long pants due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed.

Barr Lake Periphery

Leader: Dick Anderson, 303-757-4582, <rholmesanderson@earthlink.net>

RSVP. Meet at 7 a.m. at Barr Lake Entrance Station. This trip is mostly driving, does not involve much walking, and will be good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks pass required.

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leaders: Cheryl Teuton and Dan Brooks, 303-912-3341

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Marina, inside west gate near Cherry Creek High School. State Parks pass required.

Lower Bear Creek and Marston Reservoir

Leader: Chuck Aid, 303-503 2973, <caid@ecentral.com>

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at parking lot adjacent to the Conoco Station at the NW corner of Morrison Road and C-470. We will bird Bear Creek Lake Park and the Bear Creek Greenbelt in the morning and Marston Reservoir in the afternoon.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Claude Vallieres, 303-421-7715. Register with Urling Kingery, 303-641-8823

RSVP to sign up; spaces available.

Sunday, September 14

Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035

RSVP. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at RMBO office, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane. South off Bromley Lane, from I-76, first road east of railroad track. State Parks pass required. Walk ~5 miles on all sides of the lake including the banding station.

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leader: Tom Halverstadt, 303-618-6730, <thavs1@comcast.net>

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at old entrance. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.

In Memoriam: Warren I. Finch, eminent geologist

Long-time DFO members will warmly remember Warren Finch. A past president of the organization, he served as DFO Historian from 1994 until retiring in 2011.

Born in South Dakota in 1924, Warren passed away on July 21, 2014.

Warren served in World War II, as a member of what has been called the Greatest Generation.

Following years of education, he began working as a uranium geologist for the U.S. Geological Survey and was recognized as the world's foremost authority on uranium deposits.

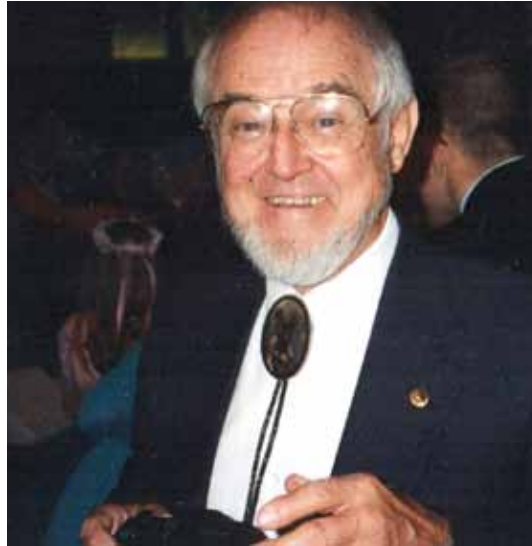
He wrote over eighty publications, traveled to sixty countries during his geology career, and was still writing and publishing scientific papers in the last few years.

Warren was honored with the Department of Interior's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, in 1994. He was a Scientist Emeritus with the USGS and has won Emeritus status in our hearts.

Warren grew up on a farm in South Dakota and recalled seeing and hearing Long-billed Curlews when he was young. He began keeping bird lists and leading field trips in the 1960s and joined DFO in 1969.

Warren served as DFO president from 1982–1983 and wrote several DFO/Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO) historical publications. He received the DFO Ptarmigan Award in 2001.

A long-time member of CFO, Warren served on the CFO Board of Directors and Nominations Committee and was honored in 2009 with the CFO Lifetime Achievement Award.



Warren Finch, always with a warm smile.



Warren Finch, the master birder in the field.

He took his service to DFO and CFO seriously and methodically researched old records, piecing together the histories of the organizations.

His home and garage contained file cabinets of orderly collections of

DFO *Lark Buntings*, meeting minutes, and many other important papers.

He contributed all of these documents to Kris Haglund, then Archivist and Chair, Bailey Library and Archives of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS), to be archived in the DFO collection.

Kris now serves as the DFO Historian. Without Warren's efforts to save and catalog these many important documents, they would have been lost.

As recently as April 2012, Warren discovered another group of DFO documents in his home, and Kris added them to the DMNS archives.

Warren loved to lead beginning birders on field trips. Many people credit him as being very influential in their development as birders.

A kind and gentle man, Warren enjoyed birds and birding and visiting with all those who shared his love of the natural world.

Warren put family life first and was respected as a husband, father, and grandfather.

He served as a Scoutmaster, inspiring his son and four grandsons to become Eagle Scouts.

He was preceded in death by his son, Andy. He is survived by his wife, Mary, their children, Larry and Carol, and spouses and grandchildren.

'Jane' answers Empid identification questions

by Bob Righter

Our favorite imaginary DFO trip leader, "Jane," sent us her comments on the Empid photos in the July 2014 *Lark Bunting*.

Jane remarked, "The photo of the 'presumed Hammond's' is the correct verbiage to use.

"The positioning of the Empid on the branch, looking slightly away, showing a small bill, long primary projection, and perhaps a shortish tail all seems convincing for a Hammond's.

"But because of the high degree of variation within and between the Hammond's and the Dusky Flycatchers it would be difficult to categorically state Hammond's, without seeing multiple photos from different angles."

Jane went on to rave, "The photo of the Willow Flycatcher by Lee Farrell

is outstanding—rarely do we get the opportunity to see this Empid in such clarity!"

She continues, "The Cordilleran Flycatcher in disheveled summer plumage is the right call for this photo."

And lastly, Jane remarked, "The photo of the Gray Flycatcher on March 8th shows this Empid in clean breeding plumage, light gray crown, slight wash of yellow on the belly, longish thin tail. Great photo, Kay."

Jane's wish: "May all DFOers experience a great fall migration!"



Willow Flycatcher, Last Chance, CO, September 2013.
Lee Farrell

Wild BIRD needs help to save more birds at new location

Wild BIRD's current location is closing September 1, 2014, permanently because it is neither sustainable, nor properly zoned for the organization's needs.

Land located along a migratory bird flyway next to Prospect Park in Wheat Ridge has been acquired through a generous donor, and now they must raise \$150,000 for the initial phase of breaking ground on the new facility.

The total that must be raised is \$492,000.

Because the organization must leave the current location and the new facility will take time to build, the goal is to break ground November 1, 2014, and reopen in 2015 in order to minimize the impact on Colorado's birds in need.

By then they will have two more licensed wildlife rehabilitators in addition to Debbie Strimple.

As a wild bird enthusiast and avian medicine expert, Debbie Strimple in March 2000 dedicated her life to caring for the birds in need by founding the state and federally licensed nonprofit organization, Wild BIRD.

Since its inception, Wild BIRD has taken in an average of 3,000 birds a year, and has released over 28,000 birds back into the Colorado skies.

Debbie and her devoted staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to achieve a 63% release rate—20% greater than the national average.

Because they are the only facility serving Colorado and the entire

Front Range that is dedicated solely to the rehabilitation of wild birds, the volume of birds brought in to the facility grows every year.

Wild BIRD responds to calls, emails, and Facebook posts from people all over the U.S. asking for advice on how to care for injured or sick birds in their area.

Migratory birds are imperiled, so their help for hummingbirds, pelicans, orioles, tanagers, and swallows is important.

It is exciting to release a bird just in time for migration to winter in the southern U.S., Mexico, and Central or South America.

See <<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/849014/emal>> for more information and to make a contribution to this worthy project.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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January	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
February	Jackie King	720-381-3314
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COBirds	
Internet bird-sighting discussion list	http://cfobirds.org

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome new members: Tom and Debbie Behnfield, Lakewood; Jane and Paul Derrick, Denver; John Dwyer, Englewood; Nathan Schneider, Denver; David and Joan Wyly, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Bob Shade Aug. 25
"Birds of Japan"

Glenn Walbek Sept. 22
Title TBD

Bill Eden Oct. 27
"Birding in Borneo"

Chuck Hundertmark Nov. 24
"Rackets and Ruins: Birding the Yucatan in the Anthropocene"

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$	20
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$	35
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$	5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$	_____
Total	\$	_____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl, Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Fall Bird Count

In Memoriam: William Finch

Jane Answers



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/OCTOBER 2014/VOL 50 NO 10

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://DFOBIRDS.ORG)

Field Trips

Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch Saturday, October 4 7:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Chris Rurik (Email: chrisrurik@gmail.com Phone: 253-225-7104)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Located south of I-70 on Smith Road between Chambers and Airport Blvd. Address 16002 E. Smith Road.

Meet this enthusiastic, new leader at Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch.

Trail walk about 3 miles through migration hot spots.

Land birding mostly with stops at Bluff Lake, Tower Road Playa, Heron Pond, Westerly Wetlands, etc.

Be prepared to carpool with expenses shared. Bring binoculars, scopes if you desire, snacks, water, and dress for predicted weather.

Chico Basin Ranch Sunday, October 5 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Mark Amershek (Email: mamershek@msn.com Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: To carpool, meet at the King Soopers parking lot at 100 Founders Parkway (just east of I-25) in Castle Rock, CO. One-day birding pass for Chico Basin Ranch is \$15 or \$10/individual when with a DFO group.

Coleader: Bruce Neuman.

This is a fee area: \$10 cash

Continued on page 2

Top-notch photographer will share tips

Glenn Walbek will be the featured speaker at the Monday, September 22 DFO meeting.

Glenn resides in Castle Rock, CO. He has become one of the most active birders throughout the state, and is a member of the Colorado Bird Records Committee.

He is a top-notch wildlife photographer. He has many fabulous photos of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife.

Glenn is the “roving photographer” for the Denver Christmas Bird Counts. We rely on him to identify and photograph our bird rarities. Some of us find rarities and some of us chase them; Glenn does both.

He spends most of his time in the field and we have all benefited from his zeal for birds.

Glenn will show us some of his best photos of Colorado birds like the Calliope Hummingbird pictured here.

He will also share some tips and techniques for taking better bird and wildlife photographs. This program is for all who love the beauty of our Colorado birds and for those who desire to capture that beauty more effectively.

The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Rick-etson Auditorium. Enter through the west door by 7:30 p.m. we must lock the door a little after that time.



Glenn Walbek, wildlife photographer



Calliope Hummingbird. Glenn Walbek

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

only per person for 4 or more persons. Fewer than 4 is \$15 per person.

Please register for this trip on the DFO website. If you do not have an Internet connection please call Mark after September 26th.

Please arrive 15 minutes early. We need volunteers with high clearance vehicles to drive on ranch roads. Let Mark know if you can drive.

Chico Basin Ranch is a working cattle ranch located in El Paso/Pueblo counties, south-east of Colorado Springs.

The driving distance from Castle Rock will be approximately 100 miles, a little over two hours.

The ranch will be birded by following the ranch roads in vehicles with stops to bird on level open areas such as ponds, wetlands, and grasslands.

This will be an all-day trip so please bring water and lunch. Scopes will be handy but not necessary. A two-way radio per car would be helpful.

We will bird until 4 pm and should be back at Castle Rock around 6 pm.

Longmont Area Birding

Saturday, October 11

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Chuck Hundertmark (Email: chundertmark8@gmail.com

Phone: 303-604-0531)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at Jim Hamm Natural Area parking lot.

From I-25 take exit 240. Go west 4 miles on CO 119 (Ken Pratt Blvd) to Boulder-Weld County Line Road, then ~2 miles north to park on left at E 17th Ave at Jim Hamm P.

Continued on next page

Trip reports easily available on website

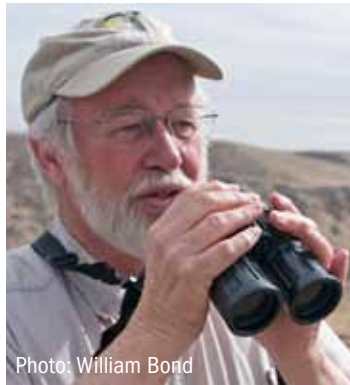


Photo: William Bond

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

For some time as DFO made the transition to using eBird for trip reports, there was not an easy way for members to view those reports without looking the report up on eBird.

With the launch of the new website, that has changed. Now, members can find a link to the eBird reports for any field trip directly on the website.

It's pretty easy. At the top of the home page, there is a link for "Field Trips." Moving your cursor over that link generates a pull-down menu. The last item on the menu is the link "Past Trip Reports."

Clicking on that link opens a window with a list of recent field trips in reverse chronological order. Clicking the name of any trip opens another window at the bottom of the screen that includes one or more links to checklists for that trip. (See example below.)

While writing this article, I checked the August field trips. There were trip lists for all of the August field trips to date with the exception of one trip that had been cancelled. Karen von Saltza, Field Trip Director, has been using the entry of past trips to train our DFO trip schedulers, Mary Geder, Candice Johnson, Jackie King, and Chris Owens.

Mary Driscoll is gradually entering eBird lists for the past trips as they are entered. We would welcome volunteers who wish to help with entering the past eBird trip lists; it is a very simple process.

This progress is the outcome of two of our newest DFO advances. Trip

Continued on page 3

Location	Date	Leader
near Creek Lake Park	2/9/2014	Paul Sinsady
Northeastern Raptor Tour	2/8/2014	Joey Kallwe
East 88th and South Platte River (Adams County)	2/2/2014	Christie Gerner
Castlewood Canyon State Park (Douglas County)	2/1/2014	Karen von Saltza
Cherry Creek State Park (Adams County)	3/4/2014	Edward "Butt" Schomberg
ANBC's Annual Raptor's Goldeneye Count	12/12/2013	Chuck Hundertmark
Cherry Creek State Park (Adams County)	11/17/2013	Mary Kay Barger
Roddy Mountain National Park (Larimer County)	9/18/2013	Christie Gerner
Clayton Trail and beaver brook trail	8/9/2013	Paul Sinsady
Red Rocks Park	6/9/2013	Karen von Saltza

Northeastern Raptor Tour

Bring lunch, water, and enough food for a full day trip of driving and watching raptors in the NE corner of Colorado. Call leader if going.

Click on a checklist link to view the species recorded on this trip in a new tab

[116854761](#) [516854616](#) [516854608](#) [516854712](#) [516854594](#) [516854673](#) [516854570](#)

Lark Bunting photo dresses up nameplate

If you thought something looked different in the nameplate of this issue of *The Lark Bunting*, you are right.

For several months, Editor Kay Niyo has been searching for a better photo of a Lark Bunting to dress up the nameplate. Last month, DFO member and photographer Lee Farrell offered the beautiful photo of a pair of Lark Buntings that you see on the nameplate of the current issue. Debbie Marshall expertly incorporated it into the typeface of the nameplate.

Lee and his wife, Linda, are active birders and have been regular volunteers at the Dinosaur Ridge Hawkwatch site and North Park ColonyWatch. From his outstanding collection of raptor photos, Lee compiled a training program for Hawkwatch volunteers.

The trips he and Linda make to North Park have yielded an excellent collection of photos of two of his favorite subjects, Eared and Western Grebes.

In appreciation for permission to use the Lark Bunting photo, the DFO board has voted Lee and Linda a three-year membership in DFO.



Lark Bunting pair, July 23, 2011 in the Pawnee Grasslands. Lee Farrell

FROM THE PRESIDENT, *continued from page 2*

leaders who have completed our spring leader development workshop have all committed to enter their trip lists on eBird, and they are doing it. With the new website, those lists can immediately be linked to the trip report section of the site making them available to members by the trip leaders.

There are many more features in the new website, and I hope you'll explore them in the weeks ahead. If you have questions about the site, or encounter problems, let Kay Niyo or Mary Geder know. Problems can only be fixed if we know about them.

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Register online or contact leader to register. Bring water, snacks, and scopes.

We will be focusing on lakes of the Longmont area.

Chatfield State Park, The Big Sit Sunday, October 12 6:30 AM - 7:00 PM

Joey Kellner (Email: vireo1@comcast.net Phone: 303-978-1748)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meeting place: Heron Overlook, Chatfield SP.

From Wadsworth Blvd entrance, go right at the T and continue around the reservoir.

After you cross the South Platte River make a hard left into the large parking lot labeled Heronry Overlook.

At the far right corner, a trail leads down to the Heron Overlook.

State Parks pass required.

The Big Sit, an international birding event, has exacting, loose, and frivolous standards.

Big Sitters count all the birds they see or hear from within a circle with a 17-foot diameter.

Count sitters may send out scouts and beaters to find other birds and identify them as long as a Sitter sees the bird from within the circle.

All around the world, on this date, people will Big Sit!

Come and join Joey Kellner and other recruits any time from (before) dawn to (after) dusk.

Stay for an hour, a morning, or all day. Drop by whenever you like. (Pre-registration is not required.)

Joey maintains an hourly chart of the birds that Sitters see from the circle. In the past few years he has tallied 55-65 species.

Bring chairs, breakfast, lunch,

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

dinner, picnics, coffee, etc. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, and other essential birding equipment.

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, October 12 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Stroll around Cherry Creek State Park looking for birds. Half-day trip. Bring water, snacks, and binoculars.

South Platte River Reservoir and River Trail Saturday, October 18 7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

A.J. Gest (Email: offsetaj@comcast.net Phone: 303-994-2420)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at parking adjoining the South Platte Reservoir.

The reservoir is just north of Chatfield off of C-470. Take C-470 to the Wadsworth Blvd exit and turn north onto Wadsworth Blvd.

Turn right (east) on Chatfield Way Ave and follow the road (which becomes Platte Canyon Road [CO-71]).

On Chatfield Way Ave, turn right at the sign that says South Platte Reservoir and follow it around the front of the reservoir

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Birding in Japan*

Tim Johnson

As a novice Zen monk in Japan, your *rosbi* (master) will assign you a *koan* to solve as a step towards reaching *satori* (enlightenment). One of the more famous is the question, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" For a birder interested in Zen like myself, I thought, why not the question "What is the sound of one wing flapping?" Thus, it was with some eagerness that I attended DFO Vice President Bob Shade's August 25 presentation on the birds of Japan. Bob's involvement with Japan and the outline of his talk was well

Continued on page 5



Female Daurian Redstart. Bob Shade



Kawasemi (Common Kingfisher). Bob Shade



Ruddy Kingfisher. Bob Shade

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 4

previewed in the August *Lark Bunting*, but it was not revealed that he attended seminary, served as a missionary, and taught at Tokyo Christian University for 10 years.

Bob's talk was purely a celebration of Japanese birds in a set of about 80 slides, including a couple of the 14 Japanese endemics, and also birds familiar to us all which occur in Japan as migrants. Most of the images, generally of high quality despite having gone through aging and digitization processes, were taken in the 1980s and 1990s in the mountain resort of Karuizawa, an hour northwest by train from Tokyo and popular for well over 100 years as a summer destination.

A few images were coupled with sound, notably the four species of cuckoo; Japanese Green Pheasant; and the Scaly (Tiger) Thrush, whose call is a lovely, pure high whistle, maybe E flat if my relative pitch was working. This bird has disappeared from the region, possibly from the proliferation of nest-destroying macaques.

Music, though not bird music, also accompanied a short video of Red-crowned Cranes feeding and displaying in snow near Hokkaido.

Bob also had the privilege of seeing a Spoon-billed Sandpiper at the head of Tokyo Bay, and an Okinawa Rail, which he said wasn't that hard to see but was unknown to outsiders until 1978.

Bob's presentation was low-key and quietly humorous, although he did quiz us a few times to make sure we were paying attention. His only verbal spiritual message was that birders are people who want to see miracles. I hope he puts his presentation online for all to see, but meanwhile here are three of his Japanese miracles.

May we all achieve some version of enlightenment from birding!

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

parallel to C-470 to the parking lot next to C-470. You can see the reservoir from C-470.

Join us as we walk along the paved and dirt trails that connect Blackrock, Eaglewatch, Redtail, and Bufflehead lakes.

We may even sneak a peek at the South Platte Reservoir where we may spot something interesting.

This will be a relatively easy 2.5 to 3 mile walk.

This area is usually a good spot for migrating waterfowl, occasionally a Bald Eagle, some lingering songbirds, and those pesky little brown jobbers.

Bring binoculars, snack, and water; scopes are optional.

Dress for the weather. Restrooms are available.

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt

Saturday, October 25

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 0.75 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Ave. Go one mile west.

Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake (see map below).

This is a beautiful, mixed habitat with both big trees and water. During migration it can be good birding.

We will amble along the paths looking and listening for birds. Beginners and new members are welcome.

The leader uses a wheelchair so the trip is accessible.

Lunch is optional but remember there are great places to

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5
enjoy a picnic and the company
of your fellow birders!

Prewitt SWA
(Washington County)
Sunday, October 26
6:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Christie Owens (Email:
christiel@q.com Phone: 303-
772-6048)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Prewitt SWA loca-
tion shown on map below. Meet
at the RTD Park-n-Ride on the
southwest corner of U.S. 287
and Niwot Road to carpool.

This is approximately 1 mile
north of the intersection of U.S.
287 and 52.

State Parks pass and Jumbo
Res/Prewitt Res access permit
required.

Register online at the DFO site.

This will be a full-day trip so
be sure to bring lunch, snacks,
water, good walking shoes, and
appropriate clothing for the
weather.

We will look for waterfowl, late
migrants, and any residents
preparing for winter.

This gem of an SWA has been
known to attract some wonder-
ful migrants. You will need an
annual SWA pass.

—Scheduled by Chris Owens

**Thank you for your
contribution
to the Research,
Education and
Conservation Grant
Fund:**

**Deborah Aguirre,
Cheri Phillips**

Fall 2014 Speaker Series at DMNS

All talks at 7 p.m., Denver Museum of Nature & Science, 2001 Colorado
Blvd. Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and the Denver Mu-
seum of Nature and Science.

Tickets: www.dmns.org/afterhours or 303-370-6000

Sept. 11 - The Beautiful World of the Birds-of-Paradise

Ornithologist **Edwin Scholes** and *National Geographic* photographer Tim
Laman took 18 expeditions to New Guinea, Australia, and nearby islands to
capture images of all 39 species of the Birds-of-Paradise.

Dr. Scholes, evolutionary biologist with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology,
will use photographs and video to recount his wild and hairy adventures in the
rain forest and explore how these dazzling creatures have evolved. Book sign-
ing and reception to follow.

\$15, or \$12 for RMBO and DMNS members*

Oct. 21 - Bird Sounds: From the Beautiful to the Bizarre

Explore the lives of birds through sound as **Greg Budney** presents record-
ings from the Macaulay Library at Cornell University, the world's largest
archive of bird sounds.

Birds make some of the most compelling sounds heard in nature. From the
stunningly beautiful to the bizarre, from drumming to mimicry, from the
Nightingale to the Musician Wren, Budney will reveal what these sounds tell
us about the complex, secret lives of birds.

\$10, or \$8 for RMBO and DMNS members*

Nov. 5 - The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction

Hear the story of the Passenger Pigeon like you've never heard it before
from **Joel Greenberg**, birder, naturalist and author of the new book *A Feath-
ered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*.

In 1914, the world's last Passenger Pigeon died in the Cincinnati Zoo. One
hundred years later, its demise has become a cautionary tale: no matter how
abundant something is, it can be lost if we are not careful.

\$10, or \$8 for RMBO and DMNS members*

*RMBO members, email info@rmbo.org for the promo code.

RBA phone line discontinued

The DFO Board of Directors voted to discontinue the long-serving CO
Rare Bird Alert phone line after the answering machine housed at RMBO
ceased functioning.

Donations to DFO funded the RBA phone line for many years. Volunteers
will continue to maintain the RBA on COBirds. More birders are using the
Internet and COBirds will continue to provide this service.

Thank you to dedicated volunteers including Joyce Takamine, Joe Roller,
Allison Hilf, Ira Sanders, Mary Driscoll, and others. IF you know a fellow
birder without access to the Internet, share RBA information with them.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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 Ira Sanders (2017) zroadrunner14@gmail.com
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Nameplate photo of Lark Bunting pair by Lee Farrell

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome new members: Deborah Aguirre, Denver; Doyle Brewer, Denver; Matthew Hofeditz, Broomfield; Cheri Phillips, Centennial; Robert Raker, Lakewood; Doug Shoffner, Arvada; Fred Wamboldt, Denver; Jeremy Winick, Westminster

Upcoming Speakers

Glenn Walbek Sept. 22
"Photographing Colorado Birds"

Bill Eden Oct. 27
"Birding in Borneo"

Chuck Hundertmark Nov. 24
"Rackets and Ruins: Birding the Yucatan in the Anthropocene"

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 20 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 35 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21) | \$ 5 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
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Featured This Month

New Nameplate Image

Trip Reports Easily Available

Birding in Japan Recap



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/NOVEMBER 2014/VOL 50 NO 11

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://DFOBIRDS.ORG)

Field Trips

Scoter Trip

Saturday, November 1

6:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Joey Kellner (Email: vireo1@comcast.net Phone: 303-978-1748)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: Meet on the side of Deer Creek Canyon Rd just west of Wadsworth.

Join Joey in an all day search for migrant grebes, loons, and scoters.

Bring lunch and come prepared for all kinds of weather and the wide variety of driving conditions November can bring.

A State Parks pass is required for the drivers of carpooling vehicles. Register online or call leader if going.

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt

Sunday, November 2

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Kevin Corwin (Email: kevygudguy@aol.com Phone: 720-482-8454)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 0.75 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Ave.

Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

Well maintained trails. Dress for weather and bring water and snacks. Scopes are welcome.

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Birding in Borneo, home to 633 species

Bill Eden will be the featured speaker at the Monday, October 27 DFO meeting.

Bill will transport you to Borneo, the third-largest island in the world and home of 633 resident birds (50 endemics). It is also one of the few remaining natural habitats for the endangered Bornean Orangutan. Bill traveled to Borneo in 2013.

Bill's photos will feature a sample of the bird species found in the state of Sabah including the Rhinoceros Hornbill (one of eight hornbill species found there), the Black and Red Broadbill, and Stork-billed Kingfisher, as well as the massive caverns housing Edible-nest Swiftlets. Everything seems exotic in Borneo including the world's largest flower, the *Rafflesia*, called the "corpse" flower.

Bill has presented his birding trip photos of Australia and Brazil to DFO in the past.

The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Rickson Auditorium. Enter through the west door by 7:30 p.m. We must lock the door a little after that time.



Rhinoceros Hornbill. Bill Eden

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

South Platte River Trail at E 88th Ave and I-76 Saturday, November 8 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the parking area at 88th Ave and South Platte River Trail.

From I-76 take E 88th Ave exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles, then turn south at Colorado Blvd.

Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead.

Walk on paved paths along the South Platte River to see what is wintering there. Accessible for people using wheelchairs.

If the lakes in the area are frozen, there can be some nice surprises.

Half-day trip, lunch is optional; bring water and snack. This trip is especially good for the novice birder and new members.

Register online or call leader if going.

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, November 9 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

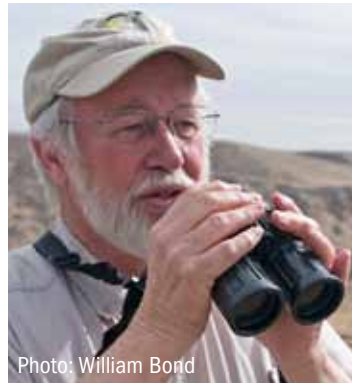
From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Approximately 3-mile walk. The walk is on park trails but can become slippery when weather

Continued on next page

Loving the new DFO website



From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

The other day I had a call from a DFO member asking to register for a field trip I'm leading in October. I wasn't home when the call came in, so the caller left a voice mail message.

This will be the first field trip I'm leading since the new website became active. It gave me a chance to try out one of the features of the website available to trip leaders.

Going to the website and logging in, I went to the Site Administration menu and opened up the list of participants for the upcoming trip. From a pull-down menu of

members, I was able to quickly register the caller for the field trip.

Of course, the caller could also have registered for the trip herself online. Either way the online registration feature makes field trip management easier for both participants and trip leaders.

This particular feature of the website realized a vision of DFO's Trip Leader Development Committee (Karen von Saltza, Paul Slingsby, and Mark Amer-shek). While they were brainstorming, they envisioned a time when members could register for a field trip online.

They also thought it would be a great benefit to members and trip leaders if members could simply sign or accept the trip waiver online or better yet simply have their acceptance of the waiver on file on the website.

All of that has happened. And when I entered the name of the caller under my field trip, I could immediately see that her waiver acceptance was on file.

But that's not all there is to like about the new website. At the DFO's booth at the CFO convention at the end of August, Will Burt used his laptop to demonstrate the new website to interested visitors. Several signed up as new members on the spot. The website makes joining or renewing membership easy.

When I write these columns for *The Lark Bunting*, I often check previous issues to try to avoid being redundant with past issues. This morning, I did that by going to the website, where two clicks take me to the current issue. I use the Google Chrome browser most of the time, and that browser shows me the icons for the eight websites I use most frequently. The Western Tanager on the home page of the DFO website makes it stand out from the other seven website icons.

If you still haven't checked the new site, I encourage you to do so. The first step at <<http://dfobirds.org>> is to create an account. Click the "Create Account" link at the upper right, enter your email address, and follow the instructions.

Kay Niyo, Mary Geder, Karen von Saltza, Mary Cay Burger, Mary Driscoll, Candice Johnson, and several other DFO members worked diligently with our web designer, Ann Johnson, to make this website happen. Don't forget to thank them when you see them.

Prestigious Ptarmigan Award presented to Jackie King for outstanding service

by Tina Jones and Lynn Willcockson

The prestigious Ptarmigan Award for outstanding, loyal, and meritorious service to the DFO and the advancement of bird study in Colorado was presented to long-time DFO member Jackie King at the DFO meeting on September 22, 2014.

For many years, though not every year, DFO has given this award to an individual who is a member of DFO. The DFO Board of Directors receives nominations from the subcommittee chosen by the Board to select a person eligible for the Ptarmigan Award. (*Plaque photo by John Drummond*)

Jackie has been associated with DFO for many years and has been a DFO field trip scheduler for 25 years. She has served on the DFO Board of Directors.

Jackie has led many field trips, including weekend trips to the Nebraska Sandhills, southeast Colorado to see Lesser Prairie Chickens, Northeast Colorado to see Greater Prairie Chickens, Bonny Reservoir (at which time she saw a tornado), southern Wyoming, and Delta, Colorado. Additionally, she has led many regular DFO day trips.

Jackie has been a leader for many Christmas Denver and Urban Bird Counts, including the areas of Barr Lake, Perry Park in Douglas County, Willowbrook, Commerce City, plus Spring and Fall Bird Counts. Jackie continues to lead DFO trips and also schedules DFO field trips.

For 34 years she coordinated the handicap student services for the Community College of Denver. She now teaches math for the Denver Community College.

Jackie's love of birding started when she was young and obviously has continued throughout her life. Congratulations to Jackie King.

The Ptarmigan Award



Denver Field Ornithologists

presents to **Jackie King**

*for outstanding, loyal and meritorious service to the
Denver Field Ornithologists and the advancement of bird study
in Colorado on this 22nd day of September 2014.*

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

is bad. Dress accordingly. Bring water, snacks, binoculars.

Beginning birders are welcome.

Longmont Area Birding Thursday, November 13 8:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Christie Owens (Email: christiel@q.com Phone: 303-772-6048)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at Jim Hamm Natural Area parking lot.

From I-25 take exit 240. Go west 4 miles on CO 119 (Ken Pratt Blvd) to Boulder-Weld County Line Road, then ~2 miles north to park on left at E 17th Ave at Jim Hamm P.

Trip will end about 1:30 since a few of the best areas are still out of commission because of flood damage.

Bring lunch, water, and dress for the weather including shoes intended for sloshing through mud.

Since this is a limited trip, be sure to register online or contact the leader.

Castlewood Canyon State Park (Douglas County) Saturday, November 15 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at old entrance on CO 86, which is 0.5 miles west of Franktown.

Turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road and go 2 miles south to the park entrance.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Guest leaders Hugh and Urling Kingery. The group may bird in

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

the park, the local gravel pits, and other local places depending on bird activity.

The walking portion will involve a two-mile walk or so, depending on the birds and the group.

Bring lunch. Group will eat lunch while watching the feeders at the Kingerys'.

This trip is especially good for the novice birder and new members.

Belmar Historic Park Saturday, November 15 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Alison Kondler (Email: birdingbyear@msn.com Phone: 303-904-9140)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet in the parking lot near the lake.

Belmar Historic Park is at 800 S Wadsworth Blvd in Lakewood.

From Alameda and Wadsworth go south on Wadsworth, turn west at the light on West Ohio Ave. Drive a short two blocks to the parking lot.

We will visit many lakes in search of ducks and resident land birds.

Bring binoculars, scope (if you have one), water, and snacks.

This trip has been very popular in the past. Registering early online or with leader is recommended.

Roxborough State Park Sunday, November 16 8:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Doris Cruze (Email: cruzeduo@aol.com Phone: 303-798-8072)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: Take S Wadsworth Blvd past Chatfield SP to Waterton Rd on left.

Take Waterton Rd 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Bird photography*

Tim Johnson

September's DFO meeting, "Photographing our Colorado Birds," featured Glenn Walbek, wildlife photographer extraordinaire and tireless birder. My latest visit to eBirds found Glenn with 375 species, 93.05% of all species recorded in Colorado; presumably most if not all are represented in his photo collection (selected portions are online at <http://pbase.com/gwalbek>).

His portfolio also includes insects (well worth looking at), an occasional mammal, and even astronomy (the 2012 Transit of Venus).

His talk interwove two themes that I will attempt to disentangle here: (1) how to go about bird photography while remaining primarily a birder; and (2) Colorado's bird diversity and how to enjoy it as a photographic learning experience as well as an aesthetic or documentary venture.

Glenn separated bird photographers into two genera: (1) immobile, employing large (800+ mm) lenses, stabilizing devices, chairs, etc.; and (2) mobile, i.e., photographers who are birders first, preferring lenses in the 400 mm range and lightweight gear. Higher magnification makes vibration problems worse; Glenn says it is better to get closer to one's subject!

He recommended an f value of 2.8-4.2 as adequate for the 300 to 400 mm lenses, though lower is better. For resolution, although many camera models boast 30 or more megapixels, Glenn maintains 15-20 megapixels will capture all the detail one needs. His pictures proved this; one could almost see the feather barbules.

Glenn recommended three websites for camera and lens evaluation. The site www.dxomark.com encompasses an enormous selection of products for comparison and review; www.bobatkins.com is more layperson-oriented and has information on, for example, how to test lenses; and www.the-digital-picture.com, although primarily devoted to Canon products, has a section on photography tips.

The real world of photographing birds offers different challenges depending on the bird. Glenn presented six sections of photographs to illustrate this,

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Sabine's Gull, Cherry Creek Reservoir, 9 October 2010. Kay Niyo



Red-tailed Hawk, Chatfield State Park, 6 August 2014. Alistair Montgomery

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 4

beginning with shorebirds and herons, which are often stationary and allow some photographic fumbling ("optimization"). This section included great shots of Whimbrel and other shorebirds, a door prize for identifying White-rumped Sandpipers in flight, and banter from a raucous peanut gallery.

Glenn devoted the next section to raptor photographs, suggesting that these birds were perfect for establishing optimal conditions and capabilities of one's camera setup, since they can often be approached closely or photographed using a car as a blind, and offer fewer obstacles to in-flight pictures. A Long-eared Owl and Merlins were highlights here.

Passerines, his next section, offer the biggest challenge. Glenn suggested photographers practice and master speedy, instinctive use of several camera controls: exposure compensation; ISO control; and movement of the focal area (which should be at its smallest value) for successful photos of passerines. I suggest looking at the "Favorites" section on <www.pbase.com/gwalbek> for examples. Glenn awarded another door prize here for Tennessee Warbler identification.

Hummingbirds offer the possibility of posing shots, since they will either perch on a feeder or pause briefly before landing. They are an opportunity to optimize shutter conditions to taste (Glenn suggests 1/800–1/1000 sec. for best results).

Glenn's penultimate section featured rare birds, from the Colorado Bird Records Committee of which he is a member. Here, anything goes as long as it's identifiable; some pictures were remarkable (e.g., Baird's Sparrow). These images were reminders to keep one's skills sharp.

The last section showed Colorado's signature gallinaceous birds, with no particular message attached other than their unique beauty. As I heard anonymously, after Glenn's presentation no one will want to showcase their pictures to a DFO audience anytime soon.

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Road. Turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd.

Turn left (east) onto Roxborough Park Rd and then turn immediately right (south) on Roxborough Rd and follow signs to the Park (2.2 miles). Meet at the nature center.

Trip will involve walking on trails. Lunch is optional but bring water, snacks, and dress for walking on foothill types of trails.

Chatfield State Park Saturday, November 22 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Edmund J Holub (Email: edmund.holub@gmail.com
Phone: 303-979-2194)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet inside west entrance of park off S Wadsworth, 1.5 miles south of C-470.

Lunch is optional as the trip will be half day but bring snacks and water. State Parks pass required.

RMB0's Annual Barrow's Goldeneye Count Sunday, November 23 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Paul Slingsby (Email: paslingsby@comcast.net
Phone: 303-422-3728)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Stegosaurus lot to carpool.

From I-70 west, exit 259 (the Morrison exit), turn left and drive under I-70 bridge and look for Park-n-Ride on your left.

This is the same lot as used by Hawk Watch. We will meet at the south end of the lot near the driveway.

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Field Trips

Continued from page 5

We will count Barrow's Goldeneyes and other birds at the Silverthorne water treatment plant and then drive to Lake Granby, Shadow Mountain Lake, and Grand Lake.

Spotting scopes, binoculars, and 2-way radios will be useful.

Registration online or with the leader is required as there is a limit of 10 persons.

Dress for cold, windy weather even if the forecast is for a comfortable day. Insulated, wind-proof leg coverings, and warm boots are recommended.

Bring water and snacks, we'll find a warm place to buy a lunch.

Plan to be back at the Stegosaurus lot by dark.

South Platte River Reservoir and River Trail

**Sunday, November 23
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Mike Foster (Email: mike1.foster@comcast.net
Phone: 303-456-2647)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at parking adjoining the South Platte Reservoir.

The Reservoir is just north of Chatfield off of C-470. Take C-470 to the Wadsworth Blvd exit and turn north onto Wadsworth Blvd.

Turn right (east) on Chatfield Way Ave and follow the road (which becomes Platte Canyon Road [CO-71]).

On Chatfield Way Ave, turn right at the sign that says South Platte Reservoir and follow it around the front of the reservoir parallel to C-470 to the parking lot next to C-470.

You can see the reservoir from C-470. A Long-tailed Duck was at the reservoir last year.

Continued on next page

Tenth anniversary of DFO/Scottish Twinning Charter prompts reminiscences

In 2004, ten members of the Angus and Dundee Bird Club (ADBC) from Scotland arrived in Denver, Colorado for their first birding trip to North America (*The Lark Bunting* 39 [8]:8).

DFO President Toni Rautus and Angus and Dundee Bird Club President Bob McCurley signed a Twinning Charter linking the two birding organizations to maintain friendly relations and to encourage and assist in the exchange of educational birding experiences.

The trip was encouraged by Veronica Holt, then editor of *The Lark Bunting*, who was raised in that area of Scotland.

The Scots spent nearly two weeks birding Colorado with help from many DFO and Colorado birders. Bob McCurley praised Toni Rautus, Allison Hilf, Meredith Anderson, Norm Lewis, Scott Rashid, Joey Kellner, Warren Finch, and many others who helped them find birds, all of which were lifers for the group!

Bob McCurley recently wrote to Mary Cay Burger with some recollections of their trip. "During our 10-day stay we recorded in excess of 100 bird

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DFO President Toni Rautus and Angus and Dundee Bird Club President Bob McCurley signing Twinning Charter linking the two bird clubs in friendship. Warren Finch



DFO President Toni Rautus (left) and Angus and Dundee Bird Club President Bob McCurley (3rd from right) during their birding trip to Colorado. Warren Finch

Fall 2014 Speaker Series at DMNS: *The Secret Lives of Birds*

All talks at 7 p.m., Denver Museum of Nature & Science, 2001 Colorado Blvd.

Tickets: www.dmns.org/afterhours or 303-370-6000

Oct. 21 - Bird Sounds: From the Beautiful to the Bizarre

Explore the lives of birds through sound as **Greg Budney** presents recordings from the Macaulay Library at Cornell University, the world's largest archive of bird sounds.

Birds make some of the most compelling sounds heard in nature. From the stunningly beautiful to the bizarre, from drumming to mimicry, from the Nightingale to the Musician Wren, Budney will reveal what these sounds tell us about the complex, secret lives of birds.

\$10, or \$8 for RMBO and DMNS members*

Nov. 5 - The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction

Hear the story of the Passenger Pigeon like you've never heard it before from **Joel Greenberg**, birder, naturalist and author of the new book *A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*.

In 1914, the world's last Passenger Pigeon died in the Cincinnati Zoo. One hundred years later, its demise has become a cautionary tale: no matter how abundant something is, it can be lost if we are not careful.

\$10, or \$8 for RMBO and DMNS members*

*RMBO members, email info@rmbo.org for the promo code.

TWINNING CHARTER, continued from page 6

species all of which were life birds for all of us, which greatly contributed to making our holiday one that none of us will ever forget. Our sincere thanks to the DFO for the large part they played in bringing this about."

Some of the highlight species he mentioned were Least Flycatcher and Black-chinned Hummingbird at Chatfield SP, male Bobolink in Boulder, Brown-capped Rosy-Finch on Mt. Evans, and Mountain Plover.

Bob reiterated their invitation for DFO birders to visit Scotland (Mary Cay has his contact information): "We would be delighted to be given the opportunity to return the compliment to any members of the DFO who come to visit North East Scotland Tayside Angus and Bonnie Dundee."

Some DFO birders have already had wonderful birding experiences there (*The Lark Bunting* 43 [6]:8) and others plan to visit.

Bob provided their website for photos of some of their activities <<http://www.markcauntphotography.com/AngusBirdingForum/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=47>>.

Field Trips

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After exploring the reservoir, we will walk along South Platte River looking for shorebirds, ducks. The walk is 3-4 miles.

Bring lunch (optional), water, and a scope if you have one. Some may visit nearby Panera Bread for lunch.

Fairmount Cemetery/High Line Canal (Denver County) Friday, November 28 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

A.J. Gest (Email: offsetaj@comcast.net Phone: 303-994-2420)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Approach from E Alameda Ave and turn south on S Quebec St to entrance of Fairmount Cemetery.

Proceed to the south end to access the High Line Canal Trail.

Meet the leader at Fairmount Cemetery in the parking lot near the Chapel in the Pines.

We will walk through one of Denver's beloved cemeteries.

This will be an easy 1.5-2 mile walk on paved drives and pathways.

We should expect to see our winter residents including maybe a Townsend's Solitaire.

Bring water, binoculars, scopes are optional.

There are restrooms available in the Mausoleum after 9 a.m.

Please register online or email/call the leader to register.

Pueblo Reservoir Saturday, November 29 6:15 AM - 6:00 PM

Ira Sanders & Tammy Sanders (Email: zroadrunner14@gmail.com Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: Meet in the parking lot of the Safeway in Lone

Continued on page 8

Field Trips

Continued from page 7

Tree at Yosemite St and Lincoln Ave.

Bring plenty of water and lunch for an all-day trip. State Parks pass required.

RMBO's Annual Barrow's Goldeneye Count Sunday, November 30 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Chuck Hundertmark (Email: chundertmark8@gmail.com
Phone: 303-604-0531)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet in the parking lot of the Jim Hamm Nature Area, Longmont.

From the Denver area, take I-25 north to exit 240. Drive west on Hwy 119 (Ken Pratt Blvd) to County Line Road.

Head north on County Line Road and look for the nature area on the left just past 17th Ave.

We will check Union Reservoir and McIntosh Lake for Barrow's Goldeneyes and other early winter waterfowl. We'll check other areas as time allows.

This will be primarily a driving trip. Spotting scopes will be useful.

Register on the website, or call or email the leader in advance.

—Scheduled by Jackie King

***Thank you for your
contribution
to the Research,
Education and
Conservation Grant
Fund:***

***Kate Brannan
Paul Welschinger***

Volunteers needed to digitize minutes

The DFO will mark its 80th anniversary beginning in January 2015. In partial celebration of this remarkable event, Historian Kris Haglund is looking for a few good volunteers to assist with the special project of digitizing the organization's meeting minutes covering about seven decades.

You can choose the years you want, beginning with the 1940s! You'll be amazed at all you'll learn and how interesting this history is.

Volunteers must love detail and be committed to accuracy. Since almost all of the minutes are handwritten, volunteers should also have a computer and be proficient with word processing software.

Kris will provide you with a digital or hard copy of the originals, depending on your preference. You can work from home at your convenience. The hope would be to complete this project by the end of 2015. It can be done with your help!

What will happen to these transcribed minutes? They will be uploaded to the new DFO website for access by DFO members and researchers. These minutes are a great historical record that will inform all future board members, assist researchers to understand the history of birding in Colorado, and provide a ready database for those members who are just curious.

Grants program relies on your donations

by Candice Johnson

As you renew your DFO membership for 2014, please consider making a generous donation to the DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Grants Fund. We depend solely on donations to operate the grants program.

In 2013 DFO awarded five grants, and in 2014 DFO awarded an additional seven worthy grants (see *The Lark Bunting* 50 [6]:5).

Your generous donation along with your membership renewal will allow DFO to continue supporting avifauna research, conservation, and education projects.



Barrow's Goldeneye, Blue River (Silverthorne) Treatment Plant pond, 28 January 2012. Chuck Hundertmark

Denver Field Ornithologists

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February	Jackie King	720-381-3314
March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April		
May	Jackie King	720-381-3314
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
August	Jackie King	720-381-3314
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Jackie King	720-381-3314
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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Internet bird-sighting discussion list <http://cfobirds.org>

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter west door between 7 and 7:30 p.m. If late, enter through north security door. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

Nameplate photo of Lark Bunting pair by Lee Farrell

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles.

Welcome, new members:

Jen Gamblin, Louisville; Dianna Johnston, Longmont; Rebecca Laroche, Denver; Susan Meiler, Colorado Springs; Lynn Sauer, Lone Tree

Upcoming Speakers

Bill Eden Oct. 27
"Birding in Borneo"

**Chuck
Hundertmark** Nov. 24
"Rackets and Ruins: Birding the
Yucatan in the Anthropocene"

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 20 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 35 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21) | \$ 5 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Loving the New Website

Ptarmigan Award Presented

Twinning Charter



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/DECEMBER 2014/VOL 50 NO 12

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://dfobirds.org)

Field Trips

Barr Lake State Park Saturday, December 6 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Cynthia Madsen & David Hill
(Email: cmadsen08@gmail.com)
Phone: 303-770-6534)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required.

From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

This is either a morning only or an all-day raptor trip; it's your choice. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one.

We will drive a 14 mile loop in the morning with stops for viewing, then return to the Visitor Center for lunch.

After lunch, we will drive to the west side of Barr Lake for a 1.5 mile round-trip walking tour.

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge) Sunday, December 7 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

George Mayfield (Email: georgemayfield@gmail.com)
Phone: 720-289-9385)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south).

Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

Continued on page 2

Rackets and Ruins: Birding Mexico's Yucatan in the Anthropocene

Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, easily accessible from the U.S. by air, offers a rich variety of waterbirds and other tropical species as well as many North American birds visiting during winter months. Many of the best birding spots are found at or near the ruins of ancient Mayan cities.

On November 24, DFO President Chuck Hundertmark will share his impressions of birding the Yucatan. Chuck first visited the Yucatan in 1991–1992 with his wife, Marjorie Jannotta. As this newsletter goes to press, he is on his sixth journey to the area birding with fellow DFO member Paul Slingsby.

Chuck will share his experience of some of the Yucatan's best birding hotspots. He'll entertain us with photos of some of the hundreds of species you can expect in the peninsula's three states: Campeche, Yucatan, and Quintana Roo.

Continued on page 3



Turquoise-browed Motmot. *Chuck Hundertmark*

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

This is a half-day trip around the lakes. We will finish up by 11:30 so no need to bring lunches, although the trip leader does like to snack.

Keep an eye on the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Hopefully it won't be too cold so there will be open water for some nice duck viewing.

Chatfield Arboretum Saturday, December 13 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Lynn Willcockson (Email: Lynnliz2698@aol.com Phone: 303-757-7000)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: On Deer Creek Rd west of S Wadsworth Blvd, south of C-470. Meet at the Entrance Gate to the Arboretum at 8:30 AM, even if it is not yet open.

Enjoy a leisurely walk and see what birds are out making a living in the unpredictable December environment. Lunch optional. RSVP required.

South Platte River Trail at East 74th Ave and I-76 Sunday, December 14 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Amy Morton (Email: razgorpy@gmail.com Phone: 571-480-3113)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Driving north on I-76, exit at East 74th Ave and turn west over the freeway. Look for the parking lot on the south side of the road.

Driving south on I-76, exit at East 88th Ave. Drive west to Dahlia and south on Dahlia to E. 74th Ave. Turn right (west) over the freeway and look for the parking lot on the south side of the road.

Join DFO for an easy, half-day,

Continued on next page

Breaking the field-trip mold

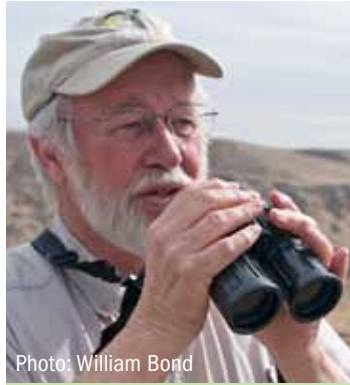


Photo: William Bond

From the President

Chuck Hundertmark

November is shaping up to be an interesting month for DFO field trips. With just 10 weekend days in the month, we ended up with 14 field trips.

Our usual target is two trips per weekend, so November is offering more trip options for members and guests than most months.

I'm not sure whether to credit an over-achieving scheduler, a time of year when people want to get out, or DFO's new trip leader program. Perhaps it's a little bit of all three.

Two of the extra field trips are week-day trips. One of those is the Friday after Thanksgiving. On two weekend days, we have two trips scheduled. There's no reason we can't have two trips on the same day, particularly when one of those trips has a limit on number of participants.

A few years back, when the DFO board conducted a survey of members, one member suggested that we have even more field trips than we currently have. With enough leaders, there's no reason we can't do that. We have a comfortable list of certified trip leaders, and I suspect we have other members who could become leaders if needed.

As more members get comfortable using the new website to register for field trips, managing the trip should become easier for trip leaders. And, as leaders get more familiar with the site, they should find it easy to take the initiative proposing field trips they want to lead.

There are lots more DFO could do with field trips. Some destinations like North Park, Lamar, and Pueblo are better done as overnight trips rather than one-day whirlwinds. Chris Owens has done that with North Park. More trips like that could be undertaken.

DFO's Field Trip Committee has discussed having regular trips for trip leaders. A more experienced trip leader might lead a trip open only to other trip leaders. These trips would help newer trip leaders develop their skills either with a particular destination like Pueblo or a special skill area like gull identification or Dave Leatherman's ever popular, "What Birds Eat."

To make these ideas work, trip leaders need to be involved in the planning. Toward that end, the Field Trip Committee will be making plans next spring for a social/birding/planning outing. Stay tuned for more information. And, if you've been thinking about becoming a trip leader, contact Karen von Saltza, Field Trip Chair.

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Thomas and Candice Johnson, Suzanne and Bill Wuerthele

RACKETS AND RUINS, continued from page 1

During winter months, the most popular time for Yucatan travel, you can encounter resident tropical dazzlers like Ornate Hawk-Eagles, Turquoise-browed and Blue-crowned Motmots, Black-headed Trogons, Red-throated Ant-Tanagers, and Black-cowled Orioles. They may be side-by-side with Summer Tanagers and Yellow-throated Warblers wintering from north of the Mexican border.

Steve N.G. Howell's *A Bird-Finding Guide to Mexico* makes it easy to find some the best birding hotspots. Because we live in a time when human works shape the environment, we find conditions rapidly changing. The burgeoning Yucatan tourist industry can turn previously remote sites into popular hives of human activity. Fortunately, the forests of the Yucatan are vast, and trails and limestone road beds can still lead quickly to sites where birding can be enjoyed with little disturbance.

The DFO meeting is in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Rick-
etson Auditorium. Enter through the west door by 7:30 p.m. We must lock the door a little after that time.



Iguanas atop Mayan ruin at Tulum, MX. *Chuck Hundertmark*

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

3 mile walk along the South Platte River. This area of South Platte is known for great up-close views of all of Colorado's duck species as well as herons and numerous raptors.

We will walk the site's paved bike path in both the South and North directions looking for Long-tailed Ducks, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Hooded Mergansers.

At times the riparian corridor can be productive with late warblers, sparrows and various mountain species. Come and get great views of our winter bird residents on this easy and rewarding South Platte River walk!

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, December 14

9:00 AM - 12:01 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day trip passing through many important habitats in 3 miles. Trails could be slippery, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch optional.

Beginning birders welcome.

—**Scheduled by Candice Johnson**

Denver Christmas Bird Count details on page 4

61st Denver Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 20, 2014

Count Leader/Compiler: Joey Kellner (303-978-1748), <vireo1@comcast.net>

Feeder Coordinator: Veronica Holt (303-646-3829), <veronicaholt43@comcast.net>

Potluck Coordinator: Cheryl Teuton (303-912-3341), Please call her with what dish you can bring.

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5 pm, Chatfield State Park Headquarters (south side of the lake near the Heronry Overlook); **State Parks vehicle entry pass required**. Please carpool if possible. Ask your Area Leader about Compiler's offer for reimbursement.

All are encouraged to participate in the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sponsored by the Denver Field Ornithologists and the National Audubon Society. To participate, call one of the Area Leaders listed below to assist in a particular area, or call the Count Compiler (contact info above) if you would like to help in an area that still needs additional observers. After a day in the field, all participants are invited to attend the compilation meeting to feast, warm up, chat with other birders, and find out how the count fared. It is a lot of fun. The compilation meeting will be at 5pm (see location above). **Feel free to bring a dish or desert to share!**

Fees: None! So, no excuses! Come have a great time and help count birds! Beginners and experts all welcome!

The 15-mile diameter "count circle" is subdivided into 24 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below. Participants should contact Area Leaders for count day meeting times and places.

Area Number and Location	Area Leader	Phone Number
1. Red Rocks Park	Dan Stringer	720-854-5911
2. Lower Bear Creek	Michael Kiessig	303-909-5169
2A. Bear Creek Lake Park	Mark Amershek	303-329-8646
3. Bow Mar/Marston	Kay Niyo	303-679-6646v
4A. Lower South Platte - East	Ed Holub	303-979-2194
4B. Lower South Platte - West	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
5. Highline Ditch	Nancy Crews	303-791-8276
6. Plum Creek	Norm Erthal	303-917-2596
7A. Middle South Platte - West	Randy Lentz	303-680-3381
7B. Middle South Platte - East	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
8. Chatfield State Park	Joey Kellner	303-978-1748
9. Upper South Platte *	Jill Holden	720-288-4018
10. Lower Deer Creek	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
11. Upper Deer Creek	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728
12. Yegge Peak	Ann Bonnell	303-979-6211
13. Doublehead Mountain	Amy Davis	303-549-7759
14. North Turkey Creek	TBD	
15. Indian Hills	Dick Prickett	303-674-0217
16. Upper Bear Creek	Laura Steadman	843-319-5086
17. Ken Caryl Ranch	TBD	
18. Garrison Gate	Steve Stachowiak	303-791-4974
19. Morrison/Willowbrook	TBD	
20. Willow Creek	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
21. Mount Lindo/Willow Springs	Wayne Wathen	720-344-0158

* To participate in this area, you must contact the area leader no later than Monday, December 15.

Remembering Clarence Postmus

*by Chuck Hundertmark
with Bob and Karen Stoker*

Clarence “Clair” Postmus, husband of DFO member Beverly Postmus, passed away earlier this fall.

Born in 1927, he was a chemistry professor and an excellent nature photographer. He lived in Florida and Arizona before he and Beverly moved to Denver.

In his photography, Clair specialized particularly in birds, plants, and butterflies. This worked well, since Bev is a knowledgeable birder.



Continued on page 7

Laughing Gull. Clarence Postmus



Mountain Bluebird. Clarence Postmus



Downy Woodpecker. Clarence Postmus

Last Month's Program: *Borneo wildlife*

Tim Johnson

For October's DFO meeting, we were privileged to hear Bill Eden recount a recent (2013) birding trip to the Sabah region of Malaysian Borneo.

Bill, former Director of Colorado's Public Health and Nutrition Program, has birded for 15 years and visited 10 countries in this pursuit, most recently Madagascar and the Galapagos Islands.

His photographs grace Hugh Kingery's *Birding Colorado*.

His trip was offered by WINGS and led by Susan Myers, author of the recent (2009) *Birds of Borneo: Brunei, Sabah, Sarawak, and Kalimantan*. A trip outline and map can be found at <<http://wingsbirds.com/tours/borneo/>>.

Warning: I've visited Borneo twice. Our daughter worked in Indonesian Borneo (Kalimantan) for two years studying orangutans in Gunung Palung National Park, so I'm adding a few additional facts!

Bill began with the location and political divisions of Borneo and a description of the habitats he visited.

Borneo is shared by three countries. Sarawak and Sabah, the two provinces of Malaysian Borneo, occupy about a quarter of the island along the north coast, which runs roughly southwest-northeast.

Near the Eastern border of Sarawak is the tiny country of Brunei, the "Abode of Peace." Southern Borneo (Kalimantan) belongs to Indonesia.

The island is home to about 650 species of birds, 51 endemic, and an incredibly diverse flora and fauna.

A substantial percentage of trees up to elevations of about 3000 feet belong to the Dipterocarpaceae, of



Short-tailed Green Magpie, a Borneo endemic. *Bill Eden*



Great Argus (male), the world's largest pheasant at 70-80 inches long. *Bill Eden*

which Borneo has over 300 species, a third of them endemic.

They are prime timber and have been catastrophically logged, replaced in many places by palm oil plantations.

(Over 80% of Malaysian and Indonesian Borneo's rainforests are gone [cf. Wikipedia and <[http://news.mongabay.com/2005/0413-](http://news.mongabay.com/2005/0413-tina_butler.html)

[tina_butler.html](http://news.mongabay.com/2005/0413-tina_butler.html)>]; this reference also has fascinating detail concerning Dipterocarp biology.)

Bill visited the Danum Valley in the Malaysian province of Sabah, home of the 438 km² Danum Valley Conservation Area (cf. <<http://www.danumvalley.info>>; the "Overview" part of this site suggests the political

Continued on page 7

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 6

fragility and paucity of conservation in this part of the world).

His itinerary also included flooded mangrove tracts; riverside and flooded forest habitat (the Eastern Sabah area gets 160 inches of rain/year); and the famed limestone caverns where Edible-nest Swiftlets live.

Considering that one usually gets only a second or two in the rainforest to see a bird, I was truly impressed by Bill's photographs, of which he presented about 50. He must have really good reflexes!

I hope he puts photos online, but in the meantime here are a few to look up. The quality of online photographs is a pale shadow of Bill's.

- The Great Argus pheasant (7 feet long) was Bill's target bird. Bill's shot of its blue head with an auricular opening was terrific. Its call *Oh...Wow*, sometimes uttered while

it drinks, looking at its reflection, earned it the name Narcissus bird.

- Rhinoceros Hornbill, whose casque may act as a sound resonator. Bill saw seven of the eight resident hornbill species.

Hornbills may occupy the same niche as macaws in South America. They are indicator species, sensitive to environmental disturbance, and are vital seed dispersers.

Evolutionary sidelight: The Helmeted Hornbill has a solid keratin casque used in aerial fighting displays.

- Bill's stated bird favorite: Short-Tailed Green Magpie, a Borneo endemic.

- Bill's stated non-bird favorite: Masked Tree Frog, looking very magisterial.

- My favorites: Red-naped Trogon, with gorgeous rufous back

and red front; Crimson Sunbird; Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush; and Black-and-red Broadbill.

Bill was lucky enough to see some non-human primates, including the Pig-tailed Macaque (one of seven monkey species present in Sabah), the Proboscis Monkey, and the Bornean Orangutan.

In closing, he described, in all-too-few sentences, the conservation status of orangutans in Borneo: threatened by deforestation, explosive growth of palm oil plantations, weak enforcement of existing laws, and a host of other problems (for further information, see <http://orangutan.or.id/> and <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/deforestation-and-orangutans/>).

Go to Borneo while nature still exists there, and/or do what you can to ensure its survival.

CLARENCE POSTMUS, continued from page 5

Clair's photographs are included in *Living Sanibel: A Nature Guide to Sanibel & Captiva Islands* and the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation website as well as websites associated with various nature organizations and camera clubs.

Since moving to Denver he provided the photographs and Bev the words for joint presentations at both the Urban Wildlife Photo Club and the Mile High Wildlife Photo Club regarding Arizona/Sonoran Desert plants and birds.

He and Bev also presented a program about Midway Island at the Urban Wildlife Photo Club.

Clair's ability to continue his nature photography with a high level of skill and enthusiasm into



Broad-tailed Hummingbird. Clarence Postmus

his late 80s was inspirational to his fellow nature photographers. Bev-

erly has requested memorials be sent to DFO.

DFO historian needs volunteers to help digitize minutes

The DFO will mark its 80th anniversary beginning in January 2015. In partial celebration of this remarkable event, Historian Kris Haglund

is looking for a few good volunteers to assist with the special project of digitizing the organization's meeting minutes covering about seven

decades. You can choose the years you want, beginning with the 1940s!

You'll be amazed at all you'll learn and how interesting this history is.

Volunteers must love detail and be committed to accuracy. Since almost all of the minutes are handwritten, volunteers should also have a computer and be proficient with word processing software.

Kris will provide you with a digital or hard copy of the originals, depending on your preference. You can work from home at your convenience.

The hope would be to complete this project by the end of 2015. It can be done with your help!

What will happen to these transcribed minutes? They will be uploaded to the new DFO website for access by DFO members and researchers.

These minutes are a great historical record that will inform all future board members, assist researchers to understand the history of birding in Colorado, and provide a ready database for those members who are just curious.

If interested, please contact Kris Haglund at 303-906-8044 or <kahaglund1@aol.com>.



DFO birding trip to Prewitt SWA led by Chris Owens, October 26, 2014. *Mark Amershek*

Call for 2015 DFO grant applications

by *Candice Johnson*

The DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Fund is now accepting applications for grants to encourage the study, appreciation, and preservation of birds and their habitats.

Preference will be given to projects in the Denver metropolitan area, the Front Range, the state of Colorado, and the USA, in that order.

Awards typically range from \$500 to \$2000. Recent past grants have included grants to purchase binoculars for a grade school, support research on prairie management, promote bird breeding success, and repair the bird habitat at Last Chance, Colorado.

Proposals should include a de-

scription of goals, a methodology, a complete budget including other funding sources, and an indication of any completed preliminary work.

It is expected that successful grantees will provide a report on their project to be published in *The Lark Bunting* newsletter and on the DFO website, lead a field trip to the research site, or make a presentation at the monthly meeting.

An application form and a history of past grants awarded are available on the website <<http://dfobirds.org>> under About DFO, Research, Education and Conservation Fund.

Deadline for applications is February 1, 2015. Notification of awards will be made soon after.

It's time to renew DFO membership for 2015!

Renew online at <<http://dfobirds.org>> with your credit card, or by filling out and mailing the application on the back page, or at the November DFO meeting.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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February	Jackie King	720-381-3314
March	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
April		
May	Jackie King	720-381-3314
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131
August	Jackie King	720-381-3314
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Jackie King	720-381-3314
December	Candice Johnson	303-329-8131

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COBirds

Internet bird-sighting discussion list <http://cfobirds.org>

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Nameplate photo of Lark Bunting pair by Lee Farrell

The Lark Bunting

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Welcome, new members: Amy Cervene, Highlands Ranch; Karen Drozda, Denver; Chris Gilbert, Castle Pines; Sudarshan Kapur, Denver; Cathie Katz, Englewood; Tony Kay, Denver; Amy Morton, Arvada; Dan Stringer, Larkspur

Upcoming Speakers

Chuck

Hundertmark Nov. 24
"Rackets and Ruins: Birding the
Yucatan in the Anthropocene"

Dave Leatherman Jan. 26
"More on What Birds Eat"

Carolyn Gunn Feb. 23
"The Latest on Black Swift
Research"

Bryan Guarente March 23
"Weather and Bird Migration"

Nathan Pieplow April 27
TBD

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| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21) | \$ 5 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
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The Lark Bunting

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Featured This Month

Breaking the Mold

Denver CBC

Clarence Postmus